INDICATORS OF POLITICAL VALUES IN QUETZALTENANGO: DEMOCRATIC ATTITUDES AND PARTICIPATION

Prepared by:
Malcolm B. Young, Mitchell A. Seligson
Max Eduardo Lucas P., and Cynthia Hamill
As part of contract **520-0398-C-00-2293-00**
Implemented by **Development Associates, Inc.** *and*
Its subcontractors: the **University of Pittsburgh**
and the **Asociacion de Investigacion y Estudios Sociales (ASIES)**

Development Associates, Inc.
1730 North Lynn Street
Arlington, VA 22209-2023
(703) 276-0677

Commissioned by
USAID Guatemala
Office of Democratic Initiatives

February 1998

Table of Contents

DIMS-TC.doc/R116

Table of Exhibits

Page

Table of Exhibits *(Continued)*

Table of Exhibits *(Continued)*

Page

DIMS-TCT.doc/R116

Executive Summary

In 1992, USAID commissioned the design and implementation of the Democratic Indicators Monitoring System (DIMS) for Guatemala. The purpose of DIMS is to collect and analyze data on the state of democratic values relevant to USAID strategic objectives in Guatemala and to assess how those values change over time. The core of the system is a survey that utilizes a carefully designed questionnaire that is administered to a scientifically drawn, national sample of Guatemalan households. National surveys have been conducted in the Spring of 1993, the Spring of 1995 and the Spring of 1997.

In 1996, USAID decided to supplement the 1997 national survey with a survey providing representative data for the Department of Quetzaltenango. There is particular interest in this Department because it is an area in which much USAID supported activity related to democracy programs is occurring.

Major Findings

This report presents information on the population of the Department of Quetzaltenango that can serve as a baseline for future comparisons, and compares results from the Department to those from Guatemala as a whole. The population of Quetzaltenango is quite different from the overall national population in several important respects. In Quetzaltenango the indigenous portion of the population is much higher than is the country overall, and the population is somewhat younger, more rural, less educated, and less likely to be registered to vote than the population as a whole.

Central to the DIMS surveys are the concepts of political system support and support for democratic liberties. System support is defined as the legitimacy accorded by the populace to the political system in general and to its component institutions. Support for democratic liberties (or political tolerance) is the set of values that focus on the acceptance of democracy within the context of democratic order. Highlights of the findings with respect to support for the political system and support for democratic liberties include:

- Support for the political system is higher in Quetzaltenango than in the country as a whole.

- The elements of political system support which are rated the highest by the population of Quetzaltenango - the courts and the electoral tribunal - are the areas in which USAID has devoted the greatest programmatic effort over the past two years.

- The level of support for the right to dissent (political tolerance) is essentially the same in Quetzaltenango as in the rest of the country.

The surveys also gathered information on levels of community and political participation, and on attitudes toward and experience with municipal and other governmental institutions. Major findings in these regards include:

- The residents of Quetzaltenango participate less in civil society organizations than the population of the country as a whole. And in Quetzaltenango women participate significantly less than men.

- Local government is considered the unit of government that responds best in meeting local problems. This is true for the population of the country overall, and even more so for the population of Quetzaltenango. It is also the unit of government most likely to be contacted for help in resolving local problems.

- Most people in Quetzaltenango indicate they are reasonably well satisfied with the quality of municipal services, and about half rate them as “good” or “excellent”.

- There is a positive relationship between how well people believe they have been treated by members of their local government and the extent to which they are satisfied with local services.

- There is also a positive relationship between the extent to which citizens believe they are kept informed by their municipal government and the extent to which those citizens have confidence in their municipality and perceive the quality of services they receive to be satisfactory.

- About half the population of Quetzaltenango believes they are reasonably well informed of their local government’s activities. However, most of the indigenous population, and most people living in rural areas regardless of ethnicity, receive no communications from their local government.

Assisting the Government of Guatemala to increase the effectiveness and credibility of its justice system is a high programmatic priority of USAID, and a central programmatic feature of the USAID support in the justice arena has been the development of a pilot *centro de enfoque* in Quetzaltenango. A *centro de enfoque* is a physical place and a process designed to make the reporting and prosecution of crimes more efficient and effective. Since the *centro de enfoque* in Quetzaltenango had not been in place long enough by the spring of 1997 for its results to be reflected in a survey of the general population, the information presented in this report provides a baseline against which

progress can be measured in the years ahead. Highlights of the findings in this regard include:

- In Quetzaltenango, as elsewhere, most people believe the justice system is slow. The public also believes it is difficult to report a crime to the police or other justice system officials; and respondents with the most exposure to the system are the most likely to find it difficult to report a crime.

- The justice system is widely perceived to be unfair. Most of the population believes the system favors Ladinos over the indigenous population, and the rich and powerful over the rest of the public.

- About 70 percent of the population of Quetzaltenango believes justice will most likely be obtained from the police and courts; about 20 percent believe it will most likely come from community leaders; and about 10 percent believe in taking justice into their own hands.

- There is a positive relationship between public confidence in the justice system and how the people believe they are treated by the police, representatives of the public ministry, and the courts. There is also a positive relationship between how people believe they are treated by the justice system and their support for the political system overall.

Program Implications

The need for USAID supported programs, currently planned or already underway, in the areas of criminal justice, civil society development, and local government strengthening, is well justified by the findings of the survey. There is considerable room for improving the public level of confidence in the justice system, and the concentration of the *Centro de Enfoque* on improving the process of reporting and prosecuting crimes directly addresses some of the serious problems with the system that the public perceives. The survey also indicates that there is a base of support among the indigenous population for innovative approaches to improving the system that may rely on community leaders as an alternative mechanism for dispute resolution.

With respect to program efforts to stimulate greater civil society participation in Quetzaltenango, the survey data suggest that particular attention should be directed toward increasing the involvement of women in all types of civil society organizations, and of members of the indigenous population's interactions with local government. The clear difference between Quetzaltenango and the national sample with respect to the levels of civil society participation indicates the need for assessments of civil society activities to be sensitive to regional differences.

Current and future programs should also recognize the importance of communications with and sensitive treatment of the public. Both of these factors affect public satisfaction with public services and confidence in public institutions. And it is reasonable to speculate that the same is true with respect to public attitudes toward civil society organizations as well. Thus, it follows that USAID's activities to strengthen national and local governmental institutions in Quetzaltenango should include an emphasis on improving communications with the public, particularly the indigenous population and people living in rural areas. An emphasis should also be given to helping public officials understand the importance of the manner in which they treat the public, and to improving the officials' skills and sensitivities in that regard.

DIMS-Exe.R62

Chapter I
Introduction

In 1992 USAID commissioned the design and implementation of the Democratic Indicators Monitoring System (DIMS) for Guatemala. The purpose of DIMS is to collect and analyze data on democratic values relevant to USAID strategic objectives in Guatemala and to assess how those values change over time. The core of the system is a household survey that utilizes a carefully designed questionnaire, which was developed on the basis of prior research in Central and South America, Western Europe and the United States. Since the inception of DIMS, the surveys have been based on a scientifically drawn, national sample of Guatemalan households. To date national surveys have been conducted in the Spring of 1993, the Spring of 1995 and the Spring of 1997. The results of each survey have been reported separately.[1]

The decision was made in 1996 that an adjunct to the 1997 national survey should be a survey providing representative data for the Department of Quetzaltenango. The national samples included interviews with residents from Quetzaltenango, but those scientifically drawn samples were designed to be representative of the nation as a whole, not of any particular Department. Because Quetzaltenango is an area in which much USAID-supported activity related to democracy programs is occurring, there is a particular interest in this Department and in comparisons between it and the rest of the country.

The Survey Context

Since the days of the Spanish conquest, the city of Quetzaltenango has been an important center of commerce and a crossroads for Guatemala's large indigenous population. Today, it is the country's second largest city and the capital of the Department of the same name. Also as has been the case for the past several

[1] Mitchell A. Seligson and Malcolm B. Young, with the collaboration of Max Eduardo Lucas and Dinorah Azpuru de Cuesta. *Third Report: Guatemalan Values and Prospects for Democratic Development, with emphasis on civil society participation, local government and the justice system, (Arlington, VA: Development Associates, 1998). Malcolm B. Young, Mitchell A. Seligson and Joel M. Jutkowitz, with the* collaboration of Max Eduardo Lucas and Dinorah Azpuru de Cuesta. *Second Report: Guatemalan Values and Prospects for Democratic Development (Arlington, VA: Development Associates, 1997). Mitchell A. Seligson and Joel M. Jutkowitz*, with the collaboration of Max Eduardo Lucas and Dinorah Azpuru de Cuesta. *Guatemalan Values and Prospects for Democratic Development* (Arlington, VA: *Development Associates*, 1994).

centuries, the Department of Quezaltenango is considered the second most important in the country. Located in the western part of Guatemala, the department encompasses 1,951 square kilometers and includes a portion of what is generally considered to be the northern highlands and a portion of the southern low land region of the country. (See map 1.) According to the most recent Guatemalan census, the Department has a total population of around 504,000, about 40 percent of whom live in the Department's urban centers; the other 60 percent live in rural areas. Also, according to the most recent census, about 61 percent of the Department is indigenous, with the largest groups being the K'iche and the Mam who together constitute the majority of the population of the northern part of the Department.

During the eighteenth century the growing demand for agricultural products and textiles from the region of Quetzaltenango led to a rapid growth in the population and prosperity of the Department. By the end of that century there was a movement among the elite of Quetzaltenango to break away from the economic and political domination of the national capital in Guatemala City. And at the beginning of the nineteenth century the *Estado de Los Altos* was formed and encompassed nearly a third of what today constitutes eight departments in western Guatemala, including the Department of Quetzaltenango. Although the existence of *Los Altos* was relatively brief and the central authority of Guatemala City was restored after a few years, Quetzaltenango continued to be the center of economic, political and cultural life in the Guatemala's western highlands.

Today, the Department consists of 24 municipalities, nineteen of which are located in the norther highlands. The inhabitants of these communities are primarily small farmers, with the least affluent going to the coast to work on large plantations during the harvest season. The other five municipalities are located in the coastal region where the population is about 60 percent Ladino. The residents of this part of the Department work primarily in the employ of large landholders, although there are some small farmers as well. In addition to agriculture, the Department is a center of industrial development and transportation. It is also an important cultural center and the capital city is a seat of government services and NGO's, and is home to four branches of the country's six universities.

There are about 237,000 registered voters in the Department, which represent about 73 percent of the residents over 18 years of age. In recent years the indigenous population of Quetzaltenango and the other departments of the highlands region has become increasingly active. This has been particularly true for the K'iche. An indication of this increased participation can be seen from the changes in the results of mayoral elections over the past decade. In 1985, of the 170 mayors who were elected in the nine departments in the western mountains region, 59 were indigenous (35%). In comparable elections in 1993, out of 148 mayors running for office, 92 indigenous mayors were elected (62%). And, in the elections of 1995, for the first time the citizens of the City of Quetzaltenango elected an indigenous mayor.

It is in this context that USAID and other donors have been working on programs to strengthen democratic development. It is also within this context that this survey of political values was carried out. USAID-supported activities in the region over the past 5 years have included an emphasis on governance and democracy programs. Between 1994 and 1997 staff of the national local electoral tribunal working in Quetzaltenango received training in the United States and participated in follow-up activities in Guatemala designed to improve the efficiency and responsiveness of their operations and their communication with the local electorate. These are the officials responsible for managing the election process beginning at the grass roots level.

Beginning in 1996, with the support of USAID, the Government of Guatemala began a new program to improve the quality of the country's criminal justice system and focused much of its effort in the Department of Quetzaltenango. As a result, by the late Spring of 1997, the time at which the survey was undertaken, virtually all the *fiscales* (prosecutors) *and auxiliares* (assistant prosecutors) in the Department had received USAID-supported training, and a variety of other technical and material assistance had been provided to the *Fiscalía*.

The Survey Sample and Questionnaire

The report on the 1993 survey fully describes the survey instrument used, the basis for its validity and reliability, and the national sample that was drawn.[2] The 1995 and 1997 surveys replicated the 1993 sample design and data collection procedures, although in 1997 we used the 1994 revised census maps in order to more accurately reflect the current population. Of the national sample, 9 percent of the respondents in 1997 are from the Department of Quetzaltenango. The Quetzaltenango sampling procedures were essentially the same as for the national sample, except that drawing a statistically representative sample of Department, rather than the entire country, was the goal.

[2] Seligson and Jutkowitz, op. cit., pp. 4-8.

The report on the 1993 survey explains the rationale of the weighting technique used for the national samples,[3] and essentially the same logic was applied for the Quetzaltenango data. In brief, because samples from each of the three national surveys underrepresented the poor, uneducated population, the data were weighted to better reflect the national population. Logical choices for the weighting would have been literacy and urban/rural variables, but these have been proven subjective, and therefore the objective criterion used was years of education. The education variable was used to weight the data, using census data to estimate the number of individuals who had less than 3 years of formal education and adjusting this number to allow for change over time.[4] For Quetzaltenango the results indicated that the sample underrepresented both young adults and those with less education. Therefore, 24 different weighting subgroups were developed based on years of education (none, 1-3 years, 4-6 years, 7-9 years, 10-12 years, more than 12 years) and age (18-24, 25-34, 35-49, 50 or higher), and the cases within the subgroups were weighted to reflect the Census data for the Department. These weights ranged from .41 to 5.88, depending on the subgroup.

Because of USAID programmatic interests, in 1997 several items from previous versions of the DIMS questionnaire were dropped and replaced with items pertaining to participation in local and civil society organizations and to citizen's experience with and perceptions of the criminal justice system. The questionnaire and data collection procedures were the same for the Quetzaltenango and the 1997 national surveys.

The DIMS is designed as a series of successive cross-sectional surveys, rather than as a panel design (in which the same respondents would be interviewed for each wave), because the costs of using a panel study design are considered too high.[5] At the national level, the surveys were conducted in the same communities, following the same selection protocols each year. A similar plan is envisioned if the survey of Quetzaltenango is repeated. Because each of the surveys constitutes a scientifically drawn probability sample of its targeted population over 18 years of age, direct comparisons can be made between similar groups of Guatemalans across the years.

---

[3] We used the 1994 census figures to revise the weighting scheme based on education (see the appendix of the first report for 1993 for details). In order to maintain similarity with prior reports, however, we did not modify the weights for 1993 and 1995 based on a retrospective application of the 1994 census data.

[4] See appendix one of Seligson and Jutkowitz, op. cit. for greater details.

[5] In Guatemala, a panel design would require a very large sample and suffer from high attrition because many individuals have no telephones and it is, therefore, very easy to lose track of respondents.

In Guatemala there is perhaps no more socially relevant characteristic than ethnicity, but unfortunately, there are no universally accepted definitions of ethnic identity. Consequently, it is difficult to select the measure that most clearly distinguishes the indigenous population from the non-indigenous population. In the questionnaire we used several distinct methods: we determined the respondent's use of language (Spanish vs. indigenous languages); we asked the respondents to self-identify (indigenous vs. "ladino"); and, we noted if the respondent was dressed in indigenous or Western clothes. Throughout the report we have made clear which definition is being used when it is anything other than self-identification.

Comparisons of the two populations

Figure 1.1 provides a map of Guatemala showing the Department of Quetzaltenango in relation to the country as a whole. In the three reports presenting the results from the national DIMS surveys we have discussed distinctions with respect to political attitudes and behaviors associated with different regions of the country. For these reports, the national data have been divided for analytic purposes into five geographic regions: Northeast, Southeast, Northwest, Southwest, and Metropolitan Guatemala City. As the map shows, the Department of Quetzaltenango falls into two of these regions. The portion in the Northwest is part of what is commonly considered to be the indigenous highlands, while the portion in the Southeast is more lowland and tropical. The population of the northwestern segment of Quetzaltenango is predominantly indigenous, while the population in the southeast is mostly Ladino. Throughout this report, comparisons will be made between the population of Quetzaltenango in its entirety, and the population of Guatemala as a whole. The analyses reporting on Guatemala as a whole include the 9 percent of the national sample who reside in Quetzaltenango.

As shown in Table 1.1, the population of Quetzaltenango is quite different in several important respects from the population of Guatemala in its entirety. In essence, the residents of Quetzaltenango are far more heavily indigenous by dress, self-identification or language use, and they are somewhat younger, more rural, less educated, and less likely to be registered to vote than the population as a whole.


North
East
North
West
Guatemala
Metropolitan
South
East
South
West
Quezaltenango

Table 1.1
Selected Characteristics of Quetzaltenango and 1997 National Samples

Comparison Variable	Quetzaltenango Data	1997 Data
Number Interviewed		
unweighted	410	1200
weighted	410	1190
Mean age	37.4 years	41.9 years
Percent Spanish Speakers	94.3 %	97.6%
Percent Male Respondents	45.8 %	48.4%
Mean Education Level	3.8 years	4.5 years
Percent Urban Respondents	45.6 %	50.4%
Percent Registered to Vote	71.6 %	77.9%
Percent Indigenous Defined by:		
Dress	24.8%	11.1
Ability to Speak Indigenous Language	39.9%	24.1
Self-Identification	64.8%	44.1

The chapters that follow present the findings of this baseline Quetzaltenango survey and selected comparisons to the national survey of 1997. Chapter 2 provides a discussion of findings with respect to the public's underlying support for the political system, support for democratic liberties, and the relationship between the two. Chapter 3 covers civil society, local government and their relationship to system support and support for democratic liberties. Chapter 4 examines experiences with and attitudes toward the criminal justice system.

Chapter 2
System Support, Political Tolerance and Stability

In this chapter we compare results from the Department of Quetzaltenango to those from Guatemala as a whole with respect to support for the political system, support for democratic liberties, and the interaction between these two. We also present in greater detail descriptive information on the population of Quetzaltenango, since this is the first representative survey of the department addressing these topics and so that these findings can serve as a baseline for future comparisons. Highlights of the findings include:

- Support for the political system is higher in Quetzaltenango than in the country as a whole.

- The elements of political system support which are rated the highest by the population of Quetzaltenango — the justice system and the electoral tribunal — are the areas in which USAID has devoted the greatest programmatic effort over the past two years.[1]

- The level of support for the right to dissent (political tolerance) is essentially the same in Quetzaltenango as in the rest of the country.

Support for the Political System

Elements of system support: The stability of a political system has long been thought to be directly linked to popular perceptions of that system's legitimacy. According to Lipset's classical work, systems that are legitimate survive even in the face of difficult times. Illegitimate systems, ones that do not have the support of the populace, can only endure over the long run through the use of repression. When repression no longer can be used effectively, or if opposition elements are willing to risk even extremely grave sanctions, illegitimate regimes will eventually fall. Authoritarian

[1]There are six elements on the political system support scale: justice system, legislature, electoral tribunal, public offices, political parties, and protection of human rights. The population of Quetzaltenango gave the justice system and the electoral tribunal significantly higher ratings (sig. = .05 or less) than of the other four elements of the scale.

regimes survive on the basis of some combination of legitimacy and repression, while democracies tend to rely primarily on legitimacy alone. [2]

When analyzing the degree of support for a political system, many studies refer to the work of David Easton who, relying on Parsons, distinguishes between diffuse and specific support.[3] Specific support refers to a citizen's assessment of governmental performance and may be short term, while diffuse support refers to the general meaning of what the governmental system represents to the citizen — its general meaning for the person rather than what it now does.[4]

To measure the extent of political system support for this study of political values in Quetzaltenango and the rest of Guatemala, we included a set of items developed by researchers over a period of years and tested in a variety of country contexts. This political support scale — adapted somewhat each time to fit the specific governmental structures in each country — has now been tested in studies of Germany, Israel, the United States, Mexico, Costa Rica, Peru, Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador and elsewhere. In these diverse contexts the scale has been shown to be reliable and valid, and it has proven to be a powerful analytical tool for measuring system support and legitimacy.[5]

---

[2] This is not to say that democracies do not use coercion but that its use is very limited.

[3] David Easton, "A Re-assessment of the Concept of Political Support," *British Journal of Political Science* 5 (October 1975):435-457; Talcott Parsons, "Some Highlights of the General Theory of Action," in Young, ed. *Approaches to the Study of Politics*, Evanston: Northwestern University Press.

[4] We find this distinction to be conceptually useful, even though we recognize that independent measures of the two categories are generally found to be highly correlated (Anderson and Galere, 1997: 70)

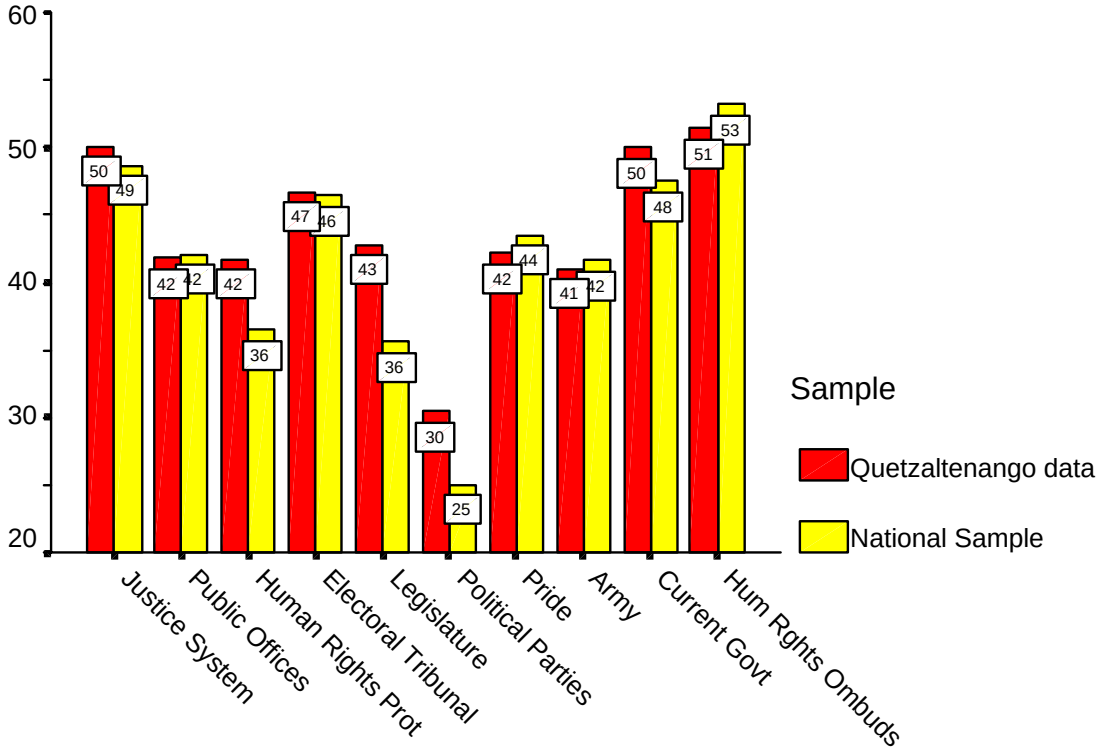
[5] For a review of this evidence see Mitchell A. Seligson, "on the Measurement of Diffuse Support: some Evidence from Mexico," *Social Indicators Research* 12 (January 1983):1-24, and Edward N. Muller, Thomas O. Jukam and Mitchell A. Seligson "Diffuse Political Support and Antisystem Political Behavior: A Comparative Analysis," *American Journal of Political Science* 26 (May 1982): 240-264. More recently the scale has been used and reported upon in the University of Pittsburgh's Central American Public Opinion Project (1992), Development Associates' three surveys of democratic values in Guatemala (1993, 1996, and 1997), and Seligson's USAID commissioned studies in El Salvador and Nicaragua (1996).

For the surveys of Guatemala and Quetzaltenango, the scale consists of 10 items. Eight of the questions deal with specific institutions (political parties, the army, the legislature, the incumbent government, public offices, the justice system, office of the Human Rights Ombudsman and the Electoral Tribunal). In each case, respondents were asked to indicate on a scale ranging from "none" to "a lot" the amount of confidence they had that the institution is "generally working in the interests of the people." Using the same scale, the ninth question asks "how much confidence do you have that the basic human rights of those who live in our country are well protected?" The tenth item is the most general and asks "how much pride do you feel to live under the Guatemalan system of government?"

Figure 2.1 summarizes the responses for each of the ten questions for Quetzaltenango and for the country as a whole. To make the responses easier to interpret and compare, we have chosen to convert items to a common 0-100 scale, with 0 always representing the low end of the continuum and 100 the high end. We believe

Figure 2.1

System Support: Quetzaltenango and National Sample



this is less confusing for the reader than using a different scoring method for each set of items in the study and, when we make comparisons using multiple regression analysis, the use of a single metric for all items allows us to compare the relative contribution of each item in the equation without having to resort to the complexity of using standard scores.[6]

Analyses of the data in figure 2.1 show that for neither Quetzaltenango nor the country as a whole does the level of support ever rise significantly above the mid-point of the scale, and that for seven of the ten indicators there is no statistically significant difference between the two populations. The three areas of significant difference are:

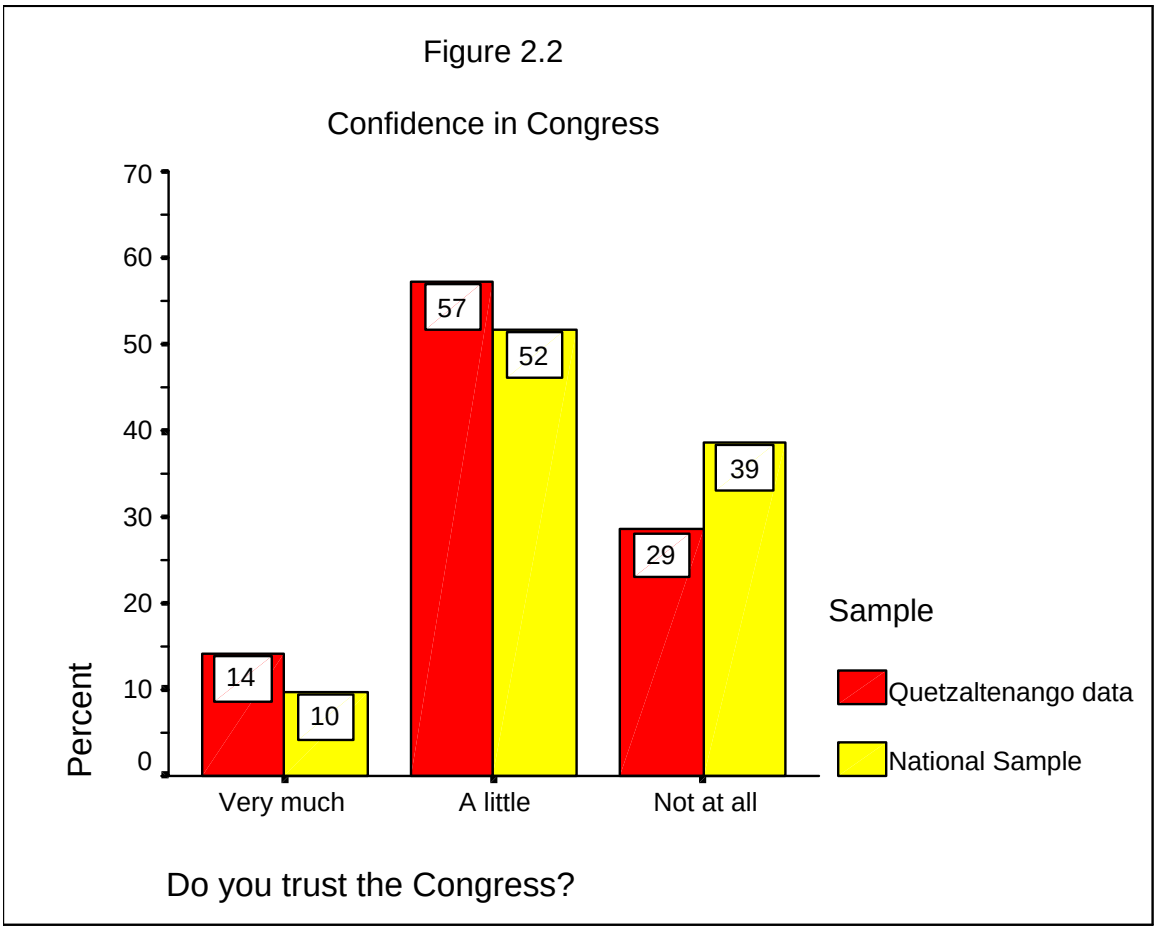
- *Belief that human rights are protected:* Respondents were asked whether they believed the human rights of persons that live in Guatemala are "very well protected", "more or less well protected" or "unprotected". The residents of Quetzaltenango are more positive than residents in the rest of the country(sig.=.01); on the 100 point scale the ratings are 42 and 36 respectively. However, neither the population of Quetzaltenango nor the national population gave the government particularly high marks in this area. Comparing the results of the Quetzaltenango survey (a score of 42) to the average scores from the five geographic regions into which the national survey data have been analyzed shows that the residents of Quetzaltenango have significantly more supportive views with respect to human rights protection than do the residents of the metropolitan region and of the Northwest (28 and 32 respectively), but share essentially the same views are residents from the rest of the country. Controlling for differences in age, gender, education, ethnicity and urban versus rural location of the respondents in the two samples, we continued to find a significant, although weaker (sig.=.05) difference. This suggests that the difference between the Quetzaltenango and national populations are not solely due to these factors.

- *Confidence in the national Congress*: Respondents were asked how much confidence they had in the Guatemalan Congress. Their choices were: "a lot", "a little" or "none". As figure 2.1 shows, the population of Quetzaltenango has significantly (<.01) higher level of confidence in the Congress than does the national population as a whole (43 versus 36, respectively). Viewing the

[6] The arithmetic conversion of scales was performed by subtracting 1 from each item and then dividing by one less than the total number of points in the original scale and, finally, multiplying the result by 100. For example, a scale that ranged from a low of 1 to a high of 3 would first be reduced by subtracting 1 from each score, giving a range of 0-2. After dividing by 2, the lowest score would remain a 0, but the highest would be 1. Multiplying by 100 would make the maximum equivalent to 100. We followed this same procedure when we created summated scales that combined two or more items in the study.

responses in more detail, figure 2.2 shows that most of the population of Quetzaltenango indicate they have “a little” confidence in the Congress, but only about 14 percent indicate they have “very much”.

Figure 2.2



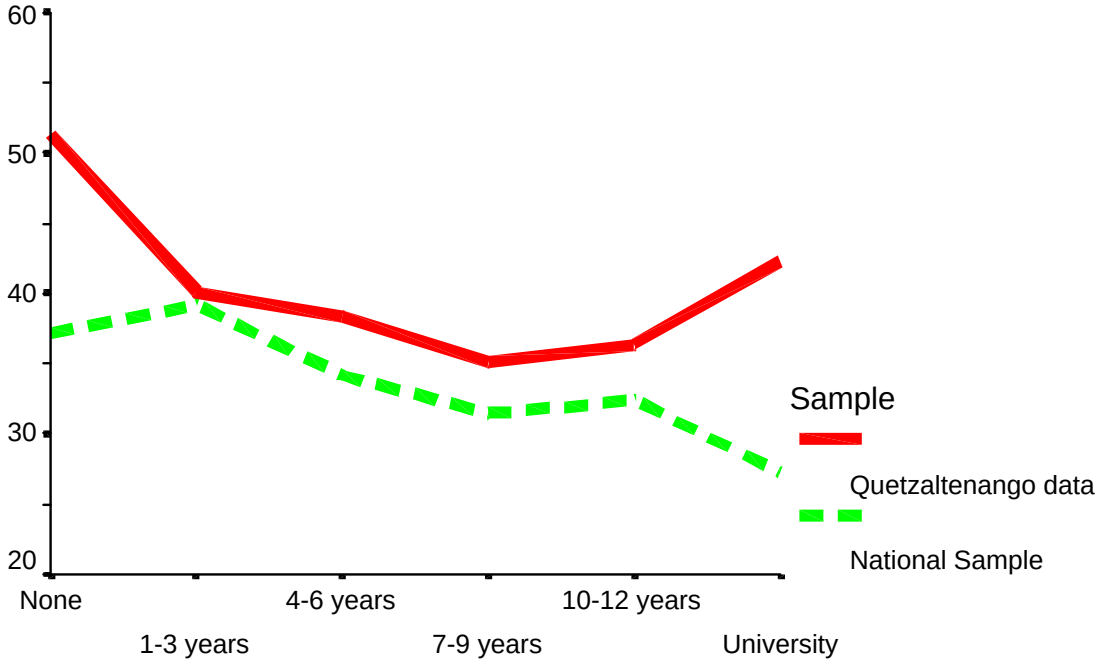
Looking at the data from Quetzaltenango even more closely, we find that there is no significant difference in the responses of men as opposed to women, nor between respondents who describe themselves as Indian or Ladino. There is also not a significant correlation between confidence in Congress and the respondents’ age or relative wealth. However, as figure 2.3 shows, there is a curvilinear relationship between confidence in the Congress and education. In Quetzaltenango the level is highest for persons with no schooling, and lowest for those with 7-9 years of education.

As figure 2.3 also shows, the relationship between education and confidence in the legislature is very different for the national sample. At every education level the ratings are lower from the national population than from the residents of Quetzaltenango, with the differences between the two populations the greatest for those with no education and those with some university education or more. When we compared the two sample

after statistically controlling for age, gender, ethnicity, education and urban or rural location, we continued to find a significant difference between the two populations (sig <.01).

Figure 2.3

Confidence in Congress and Education



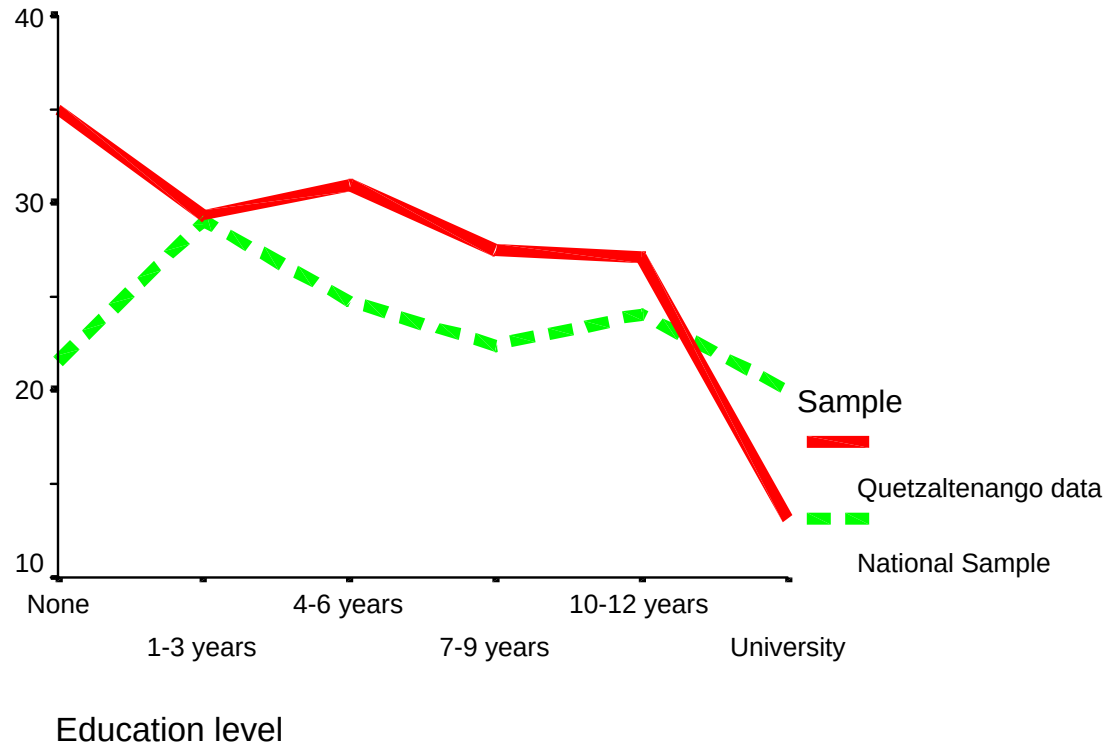
- *Confidence in political parties*: Although the population of Quetzaltenango has significantly greater (<.01) confidence in political parties than do the residents of the country as a whole (30 versus 25), this is the institution receiving the lowest level of support from both populations.[7] With respect to Quetzaltenango, there is no statistically significant difference in the responses on the basis of gender or ethnicity, nor is there a meaningful correlation between confidence in parties and age or relative wealth. As figure 2.4 shows, however, there is a clear and negative relationship between views regarding political parties and education, with university level respondents giving parties a rating of around 15 on the 100 point scale. Also, and as was the case with confidence in the legislature, the gap

[7]After controlling for age, gender, ethnicity, education and location, the difference between Quetzaltenango and the country as a whole continue to be significant (sig.=.02).

between Quetzaltenango and the national population is greatest for persons with no education.

Figure 2.4

Confidence in Political Parties and Education



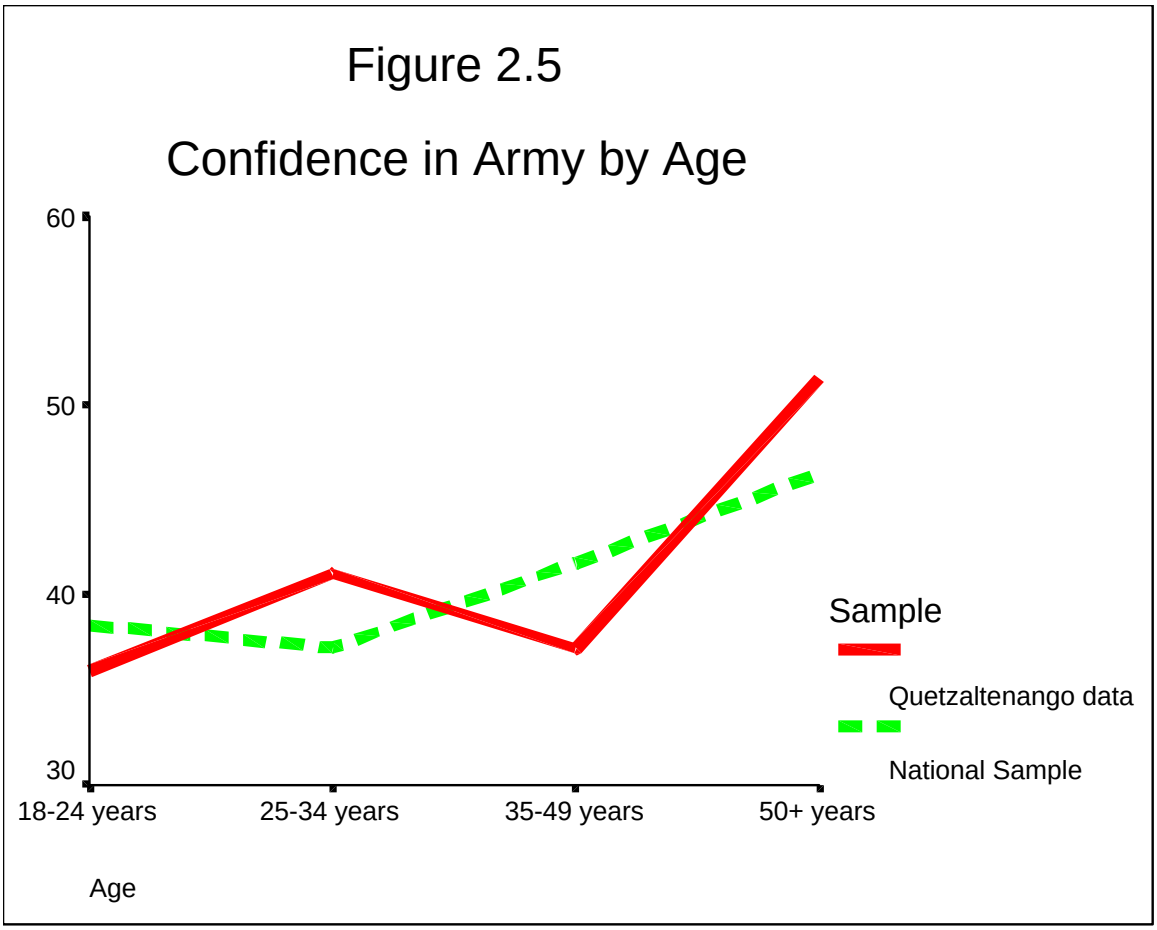
To gain more insight into the values of the Quetzaltenango population, we analyzed the other seven elements of political system support in terms of gender, ethnicity, age, education and relative wealth. Analyses with respect to public confidence in the **electoral tribunal**, **public offices**, and the office of the **Human Rights Ombudsman** revealed no statistically significant differences between the responses of males and females or between Indians and Ladinos, or on the basis of age, education or relative wealth. Similarly, there is no difference in these respects to the general question about pride in the Guatemalan political system. There are, however, some significant differences in how different segments of the population view the courts, the Army, and current government. In brief, these are as follows:

- *Courts:* Although there are no significant differences based on gender, ethnicity, or age, there are differences among respondents on the basis of relative wealth and education. As will be discussed in more detail in chapter 4, there is a significant negative relationship between confidence in the courts and both education and wealth. That is, the less well educated are more supportive of the courts than people with higher levels of education, and the less affluent are more supportive than respondents with relatively more material wealth. This is true for both Quetzaltenango and the country as a whole.

- *Army:* There are differences among respondents on the basis of age, and education, but not on the basis of gender, ethnicity or wealth. There is a significant difference (sig. <.01) between younger and older respondents with respect to the confidence they place in the Army. As figure 2.5 shows, there is essentially no difference in the responses of the three age categories between 18 and 49 years old; these groups give the Army a rating of between 36 (for 18-24 year olds) and 41 (for 25-34 year olds) on our 100 point scale. The responses of people 50 years old or more were significantly more positive, however, giving the

Figure 2.5

Confidence in Army by Age

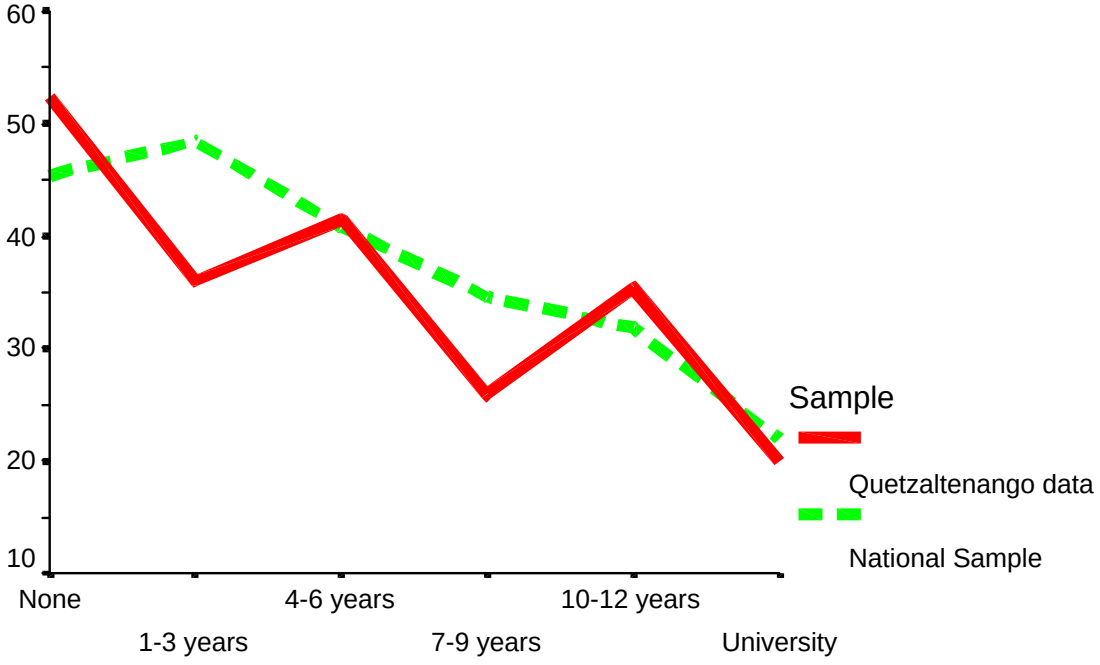


Army a rating of 52 on the 100 point scale. In each of the age groups the percentage of Indians exceeds the percentage of Ladinos (from 58 to 68 percent), so the higher ratings by the older members of the population does not seem to be accounted for by a difference in ethnic background.

As figure 2.6 shows, the relationship between support for the Army and level of education is the opposite as that for age. In Quetzaltenango, and the rest of the country as well, respondents with no formal education are significantly more supportive of the Army than respondents in any of the other educational groups. In Quetzaltenango, the range goes from a scale score of 52 for those with no education to a score of 20 for those with at least some university level education. There is not a significant difference between the two primary school level groups (36 and 42, respectively) or between the two groups at the secondary school level (26 and 36, respectively).

Figure 2.6

Confidence in the Army by Education



- *Current Government:* Again we found differences among respondents on the basis of age and education, but not on the basis of gender, ethnicity or wealth. The highest level of support, a score of 60 on the 100 point scale, comes from those with the least amount of education. They are significantly more positive than those with a primary school level or some university level experience (both score about 46). Respondents with secondary school level education scored the lowest (about 40), although the difference between the primary and secondary level respondents is not statistically significant.

- With respect to age, the older respondents are significantly more positive than the younger, with those in the 18 to 24 age group giving a rating of 45 and those 50 years old or older rating the current government at a 55. Statistically, there is not a significant difference between the youngest group and those in the middle years (a scale score of 50 from those is the 25-34 age group and of 49 from those 35 to 49 years of age).

Composite measure of system support: In order to analyze the single concept of system support, we first examined the relationship of each of the variables analyzed above to see if they relate to each other in a systematic way and therefore can formally be considered to form part of a single dimension called "system support." We dropped four of the ten variables from our overall scale of system support on conceptual grounds: support for the current government, since it only measures incumbent support; confidence in the army, since that is an institution not associated with democratic governance; confidence in the Human Rights Ombudsman, since that is most likely a reflection of public views toward a specific individual; and pride, since for technical reasons the item was excluded from the analyses of the 1993 through 1997 national level data and we want to make the analyses in this report consistent with those previously reported.

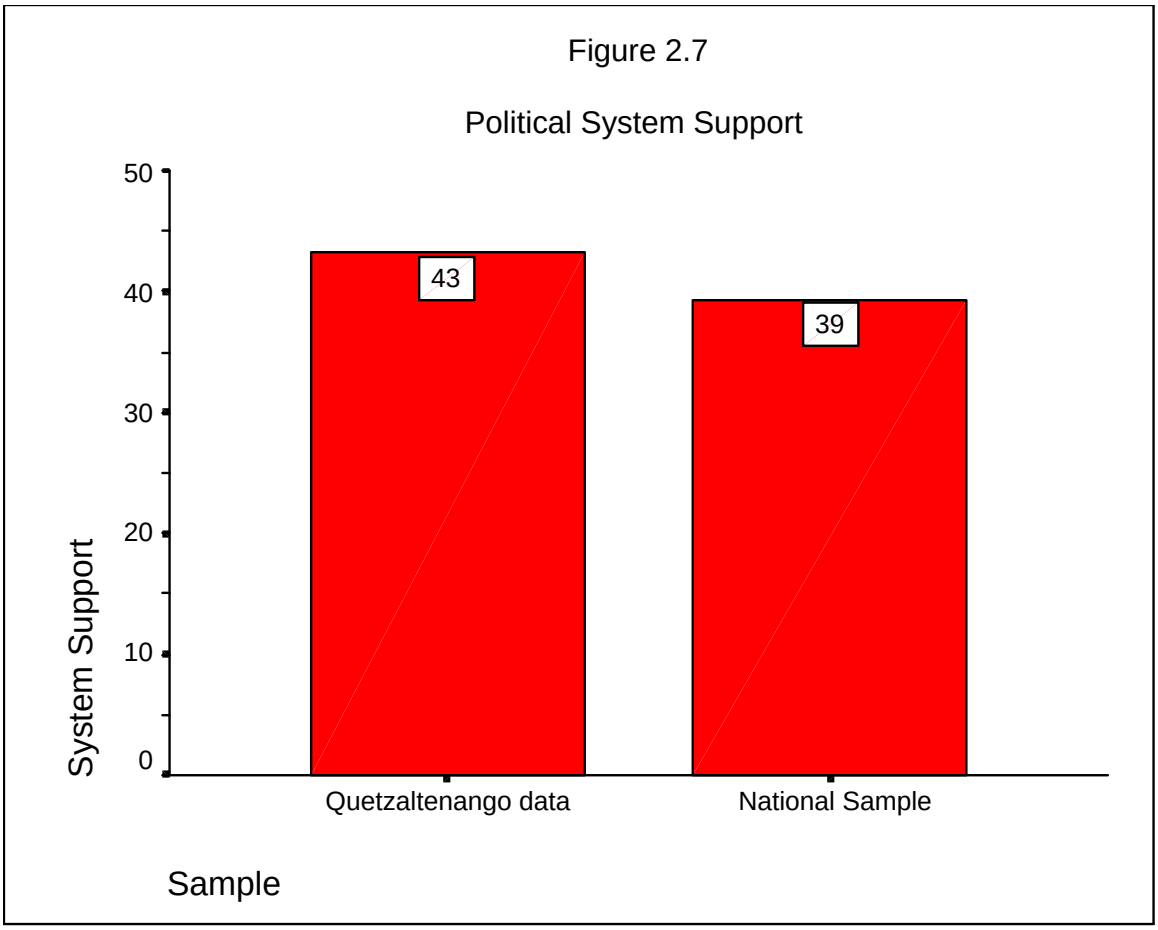
In our previous studies in Guatemala we found that we could form a reliable scale with the remaining six items: courts, legislature, election tribunal, public offices, political parties, and protection of human rights.[8] We summed the six items into an overall scale that ranges from a low of 0 to a high of 100.[9] The overall mean for the 1997 national survey was 39.4. There had been no statistically significant change in the level of support from 1993 to 1995 or from 1995 to 1997.

[8]The Alpha reliability index for the six items was .78 for the1993 and 1995 national samples and for the Quetzaltenango sample as well.

[9]We summed each item, which ranged from 0 to 100, and then divided by 6.

The level of support from the population of Quetzaltenango is significantly higher than for all Guatemalans (see figure 2.7). On the scale of 100, the population of Quetzaltenango gave a system support rating of 43.2., which is significantly higher (sig. <.01) than the country as a whole. After controlling for age, gender, ethnicity, education and urban versus rural location, the difference between the two samples continued to be significant (.05).

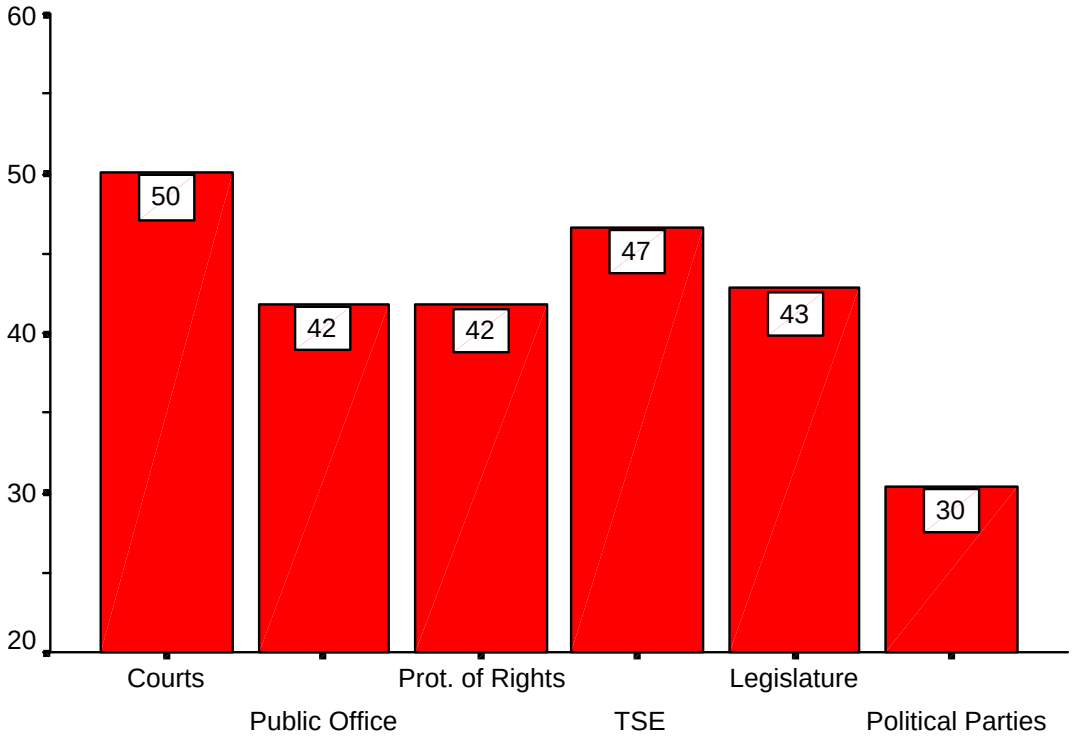
Figure 2.7



As figure 2.8 shows, in Quetzaltenango the elements with the highest levels of support are the courts and the electoral tribunal. These are the areas in which USAID democracy related programs have focused their attention in Quetzaltenango over the past several years.

Figure 2.8

Elements of System Support: Quetzaltenango



Support for Democratic Liberties

System support is a critical factor in ensuring political stability, but stable systems are not necessarily democratic ones. Stable democracies are, presumably, undergirded with not only high levels of system support but also high levels of support for democratic norms, especially for civil liberties and political tolerance.[10]

As discussed at some length in the first DIMS report,[11] support for the right to participate and tolerance of disliked groups are central pillars of democratic political culture. In Polyarchy, Dahl argued that political cultures that support liberal, representative institutions are supported by two key mass attitudes: support for a system of widespread political participation and support for the right of minority

[10] Seligson and Jutkowitz. op. cit. p38.

[11] Seligson and Jutkowitz. op. cit.

dissent.[12] In other words, a democratic culture is one that is both extensive and inclusive, with extensive cultures supporting democratic participation and inclusive cultures supporting civil liberties for unpopular groups.

Based on over a decade of prior research in Central America, we chose to measure extensive participation by three variables: support for participation in civic groups, political parties and protests. Because we expected near unanimity, and thus little or variance among respondents in Guatemala, we did not ask about support for voting, which otherwise would have been included on our extensive participation scale.

One can support a wide variety of participatory forms and still be opposed to the right of unpopular groups to participate. For this reason, we believe that inclusive, rather than extensive, participation is the more stringent test of democratic commitment. Our measure of inclusive participation in the 1993 national DIMS survey was divided into two batteries. The first was comprised of three items that measured opposition to the suppression of democratic liberties — approval or disapproval of the government's prohibiting marches, meetings of government critics, and censorship of the media. The second was composed of four items comprising a measure of the right to dissent, in which we asked about extending to critics of the government the right to vote, organize demonstrations, run for office, and speak out. The scale score results in 1993 for the items in the first battery were quite high (76, 82 and 84 points, respectively, out of a hundred), and they were not included in the 1995 or 1997 readministrations of the survey. Thus, in this report the assessment of extensive participation is based on the right to dissent, or political tolerance battery of the original scale.

Extensive Participation: The level of support for conventional modes of political participation in Quetzaltenango and Guatemala as a whole are compared in figure 2.9 Respondents were asked whether they approved, disapproved or were indifferent with respect to the public participating in: legal demonstrations, working for a party or a candidate during an election campaign, and participating in community groups or associations in order to resolve community problems.

As the figure shows, the level of support with respect to each of these items in both of the surveys was on the positive end of the scale (i.e., above 50 on the scale 0-100). There is no statistically significant difference between the population of Quetzaltenango and the national survey in the level of support for participation in election campaigns or in legal demonstrations. There is, however, a statistically significant (sig., <.05) difference in the support for participation in community groups.

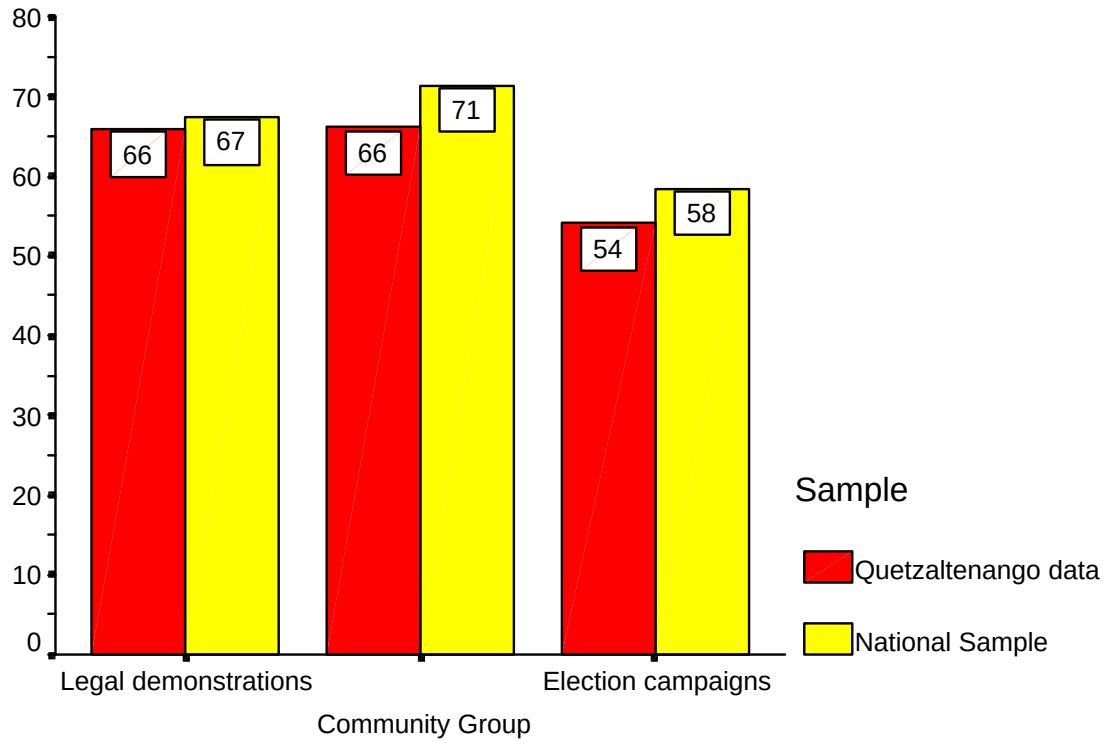
[12]Robert Dahl, Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971. Also see: Herbert McClosky and Alida Brill, Dimensions of Tolerance: What Americans Believe about Civil Liberties, New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1983

The population of Quetzaltenango is less supportive of people "participating in groups or associations to try and resolve problems of their community" than is the country as a whole, but both the populations are quite favorable in this regard (scores of 66 and 71, respectively).

To gain more insight into the population of Quetzaltenango we analyzed the responses with respect to these three variables in terms of gender and ethnic background. Essentially, there were no differences along either of these dimensions with respect to approval of legal demonstrations or election campaigns. There were significant differences, however, with respect to participation in community groups. Ladinos are significantly (.001) more approving of participating in community groups than persons who identify themselves as Indian, with Ladinos having a rating of 76 as opposed to 59 for Indians. Similarly, males are significantly more approving (<.01) than females, with males having a rating of 73 as opposed to 60 for females. It is important to again point out that despite these differences, all of these groups were substantially beyond the mid-point of the 100 point scale and thus quite approving of participating in community improvement organizations.

Figure 2.9

Support for Extensive Participation



Inclusive Participation — Political Tolerance or the Right to Dissent: Respondents to the items making up the political tolerance scale were asked if they were willing to extend the crucial civil liberties of the right to vote, demonstrate, run for office and exercise free speech (by making speeches on the radio or television) to those who are critics of their system of government. These right-to-dissent items are a stringent test of democratic liberties, and not surprisingly the scores of respondents in Guatemala (as elsewhere in Central America) are lower here than on the extensive participation scale.

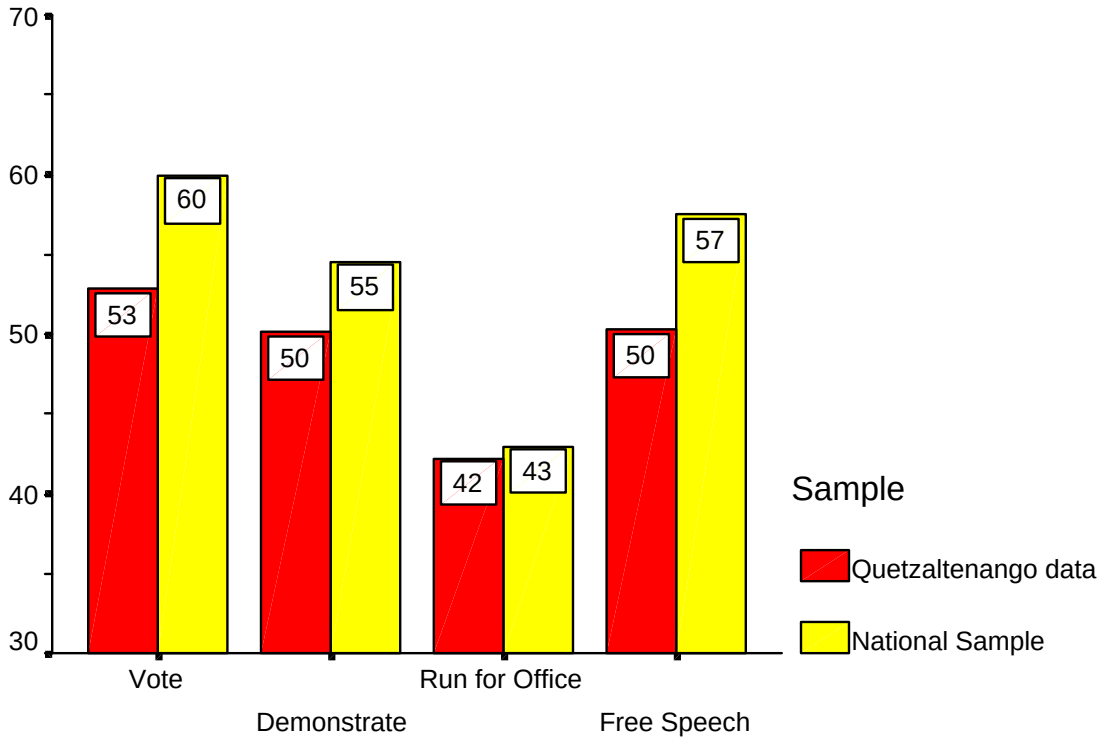
Figure 2.10 displays the results from both surveys for the four variables that comprise the political tolerance scale. As the figure shows, the responses from Quetzaltenango are systematically lower than from the respondents in the national sample, although the difference is statistically significant for only two of the four variables: the right to vote and freedom of speech. For both the Quetzaltenango and the country as a whole, only one variable — "run for office" — is in the intolerant range (less that 50) of our scale. As shown in the DIMS report comparing the national survey data for 1993, 1995 and 1997, there has been an increase in each of these four indicators of political tolerance between 1993 and 1997, with increases each year with respect to voting and freedom of speech. Although lagging somewhat behind the national averages in 1997, on all four variables the residents of Quetzaltenango in 1997 registered more tolerant attitudes than did the national population in 1993.

To simplify the analysis of the support for the right to dissent, as part of our national level analyses we created an index of political tolerance by combining the four variables discussed above and depicted in figure 2.10, and we determined that the combined scale was reliable (Alpha = .84). We then summed each of the four variables in the index and divided by 4 so that the index had the same 0-100 range as it did in previous analyses.

The scores on the tolerance index for Quetzaltenango and the country as a whole are shown in figure 2.11. As the exhibit shows, the level of tolerance for the national level survey is slightly higher than for Quetzaltenango (52 versus 49), but the difference between the two is not statistically significant.

Figure 2.10

Elements of Political Tolerance



To understand more about the nature of political tolerance in Quetzaltenango, we looked at the relationship between our measure of tolerance and the gender, age, education, and ethnicity of the sample. Looking first at these variables individually, the analyses show:

- **Gender:** There is no statistically significant difference between males and females. (The level for males is 45 and for females it is 53.)

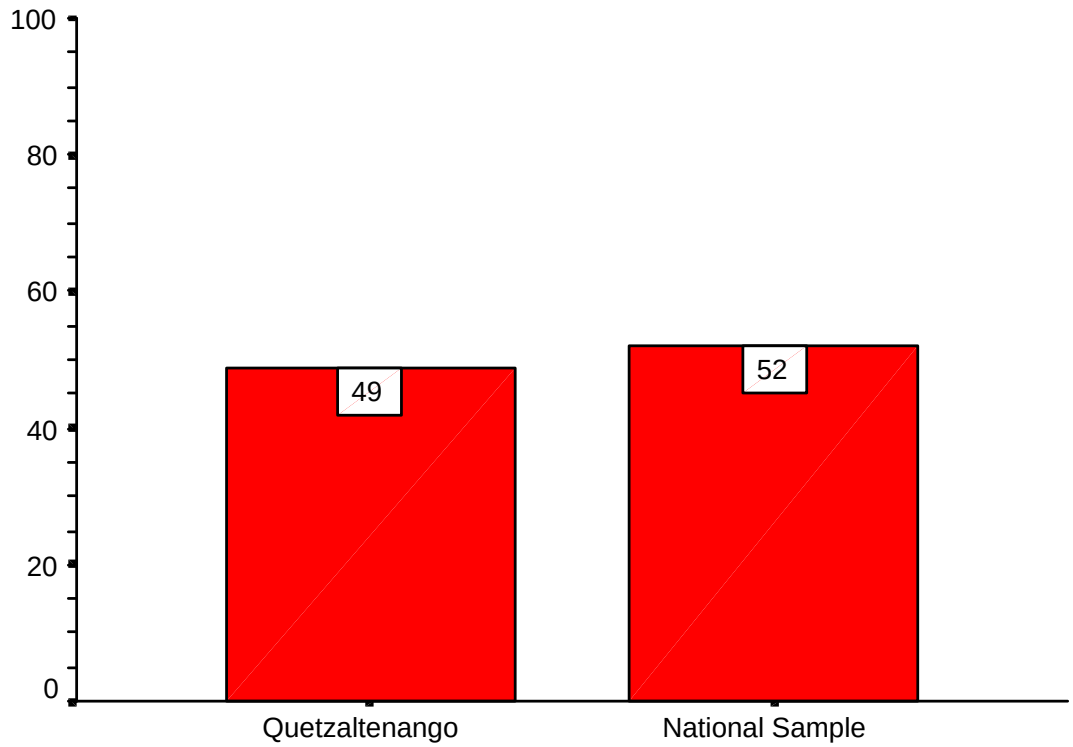
- **Ethnicity:** There is no statistically significant difference between Indians and Ladinos. (The level for Indians is 49 and for Ladinos it is 51.)

- **Age:** There was no meaningful relationship between age and tolerance in the Quetzaltenango survey, nor is there one in the national population as a whole.

- **Education:** There is a positive relationship (r = .14) between tolerance and level of education for the Quetzaltenango, as there is for the national population as a whole.

Figure 2.11

Political Tolerance



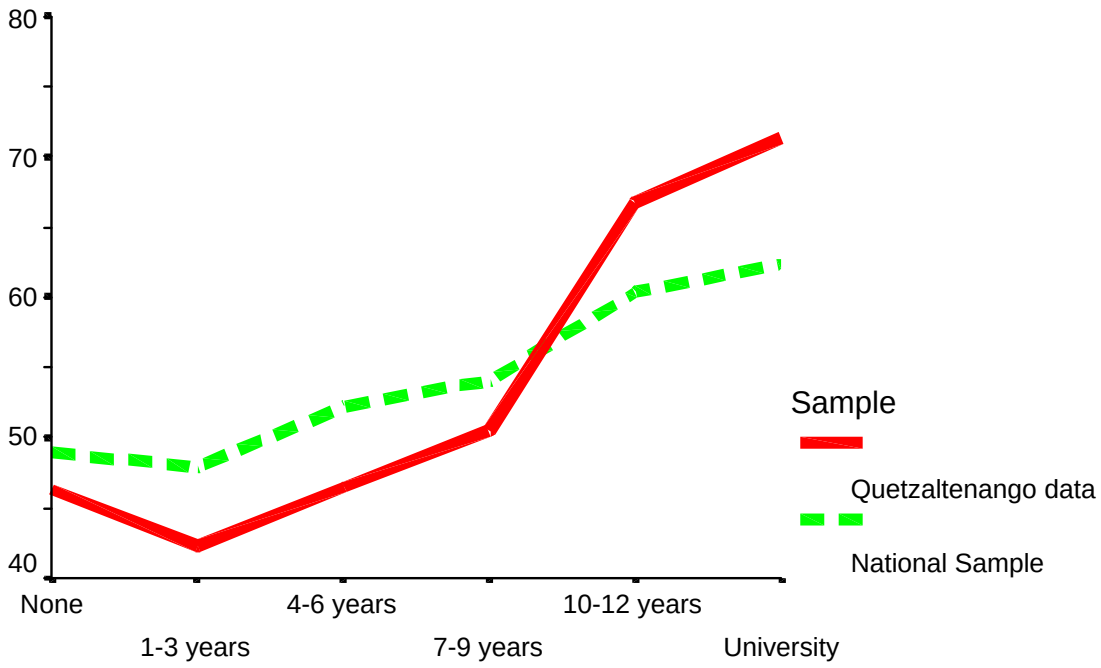
As the figure 2.12 shows, there is essentially no difference in the responses of people with no education and those whose education stopped by the end of their primary school years. The significant increase (<.01) is between the end of the primary and secondary levels, with ratings of 45 and 67, respectively. The increase between secondary school completion and at least some university level education (67 to 71) is not statistically significant, but the number of respondents in the sample with university level education is quite small.

- **Income:** In both samples there was a statistically significant, positive relationship between income and tolerance. In Quetzaltenango, as shown in figure 2.13, the significant difference is between the least affluent third of the population and the middle third (ratings of 37 and 55, respectively). As reported in the prior DIMS survey reports, the relationship between relative wealth and tolerance was not nearly as clear as in the 1997 data. In 1993 and 1995, the relationships were in different directions and in neither case large enough to be meaningful, whereas in 1997 there was a significant difference on the basis of

income, with rating of 38 for those with the least material wealth and 58 for the third if the population with the most.

Figure 2.12

Political Tolerance and Education

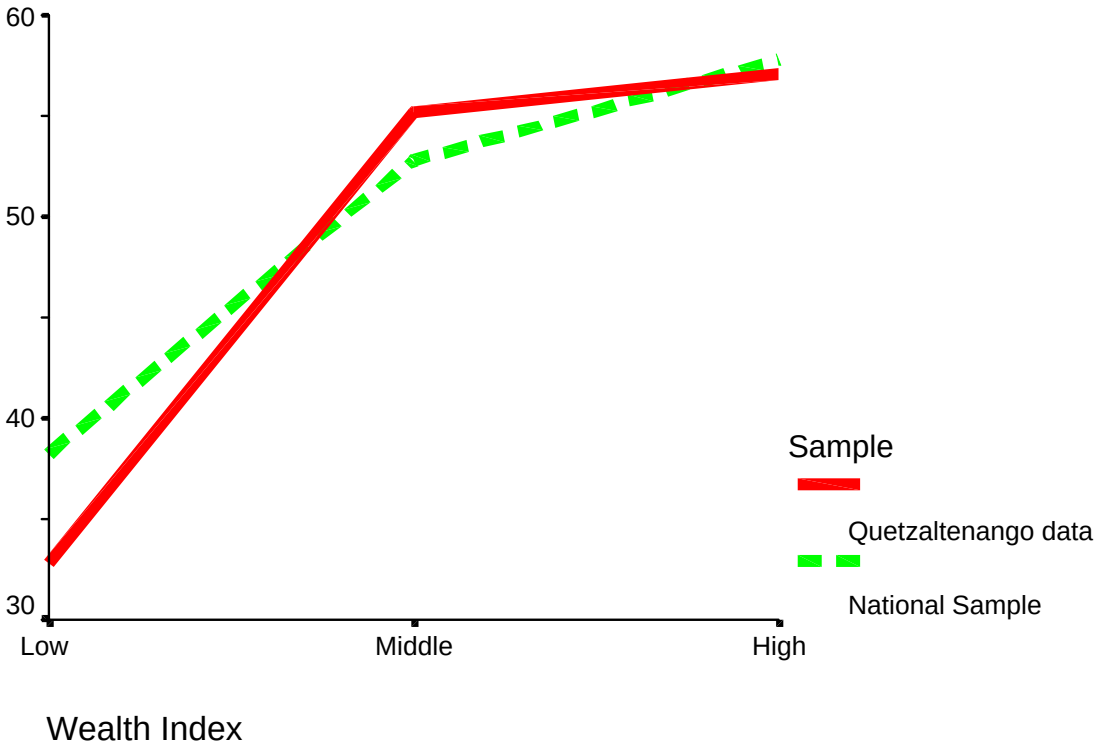


To get a sense of the relative strength of each of these five factors in explaining levels of tolerance for the population of Quetzaltenango we utilized multiple regression analysis. This technique allows us to compare the relative importance of the factors we have analyzed while controlling for (holding constant) all the others.

The regression analysis for the Quetzaltenango survey found relative wealth to be the strongest of the five predictors of tolerance. As might be expected, there is a fairly high correlation between education and wealth (r^2=.56), with the regression analysis indicating that relative wealth is a somewhat better predictor of tolerance that education by itself.

Figure 2.13

Political Tolerance and Wealth



Interrelationship Between System Support and Democratic Norms

The theoretical basis for relating tolerance and system support was discussed at some length in the study's first report.[13] Essentially, when the complexity is reduced, system support can be either high or low and, likewise, tolerance can be either high or low.

A table representing all the possible combinations of system support and political tolerance has four cells:

- **High support and high tolerance** — This combination is predicted to be the most politically stable case. High support is needed in noncoercive environments for the system to be stable, and tolerance is needed for the system to remain democratic.

[13]Seligson and Jutkowitz. *op. cit.* pp. 54-57.

Systems with this combination of attitude are likely to experience a deepening of democracy.

- **High support but low tolerance** — Systems with this combination are relatively stable (because of the high system support) but undemocratic. They are systems which tend toward oligarchical rule in which democratic rights are restricted.

- **Low support but high tolerance** — This combination is considered to be one of unstable democracy. This is not necessarily a situation of reduced civil liberties, since instability could serve to force the system to deepen its democracy, especially when the values tend toward political tolerance. In this situation, it is difficult to predict whether the instability will result in greater democratization or a protracted period of instability, perhaps characterized by considerable violence.

- **Low support and low tolerance** — This situation leads to democratic breakdown. Overtime, the current political system is likely to be replaced one which is autocratic.

The results of relating the two variables using Quetzaltenango survey data are shown in table 2.1. As table shows, in Quetzaltenango in 1997 stable democracy represents 22 percent of the population, and 33 percent of the population falls into the other of the two democracy cells, meaning that over half (55%) of the population have values consistent with strengthening a democratic regime. This compares to 24 percent of the overall Guatemalan population falling into the stable democracy cell, with 58 percent falling into the combination of the two democracy categories.

Table 2.1
Relationship Between Tolerance and System Support in Quetzaltenango

	Tolerance	
System Support	High	Low
High	Stable (deepening) Democracy 22%	Oligarchy 22%
Low	Unstable Democracy 33%	Democratic Breakdown 23%

DIMS-CH2.doc/R116

Chapter 3
Civil Society, Local Government and Democracy

In this chapter we summarize information from the Quetzaltenango survey with respect to citizen participation in community and political activities and citizen perceptions of and involvement in their local units of government. From our analyses of the Quetzaltenango survey and comparisons with 1997 national survey we conclude:

- Residents of Quetzaltenango participate less in civil society organizations than do residents of the country as a whole. And in Quetzaltenango women participate significantly less than men.

- Local government is considered the unit of government that responds best in meeting local problems. This is true for the population of the country overall, and even more so for the population of Quetzaltenango. It is also the unit of government most likely to be contacted for help in resolving local problems.

- Most people in Quetzaltenango indicate they are reasonably well satisfied with the quality of municipal services, and about half rate them as "good" or "excellent".

- There is a positive relationship between the quality of communication between the local government and its citizens and the extent of confidence those citizens have in their municipality and their perception of the quality of services they receive.

- About half the population of Quetzaltenango believes they are reasonably well informed of their local government's activities. However, most Indians, and most people living in rural areas regardless of ethnicity, receive no communications from their local government.

Level and Types of Civil Society Participation

In recent years there has been increasing attention given by social scientists and policy makers to the potential contribution of participation in civil society to the development of stable democracies.[1] By the term "civil society" we mean the wide range of non-governmental associations, organizations, clubs, and committees that exist throughout the world in societies in which they are not prohibited by repressive governments. In Guatemala, USAID has supported several activities in support of

[1]See for example: Bob Edwards and Michael W. Foley, *American Behavioral Scientist,* "Social Capital, Civil Society, and Contemporary Democracy," vol. 40 (March/April) (1997).

strengthening civil society over the past five years, and in the fall of 1997 is embarking on a major new initiative in this arena.

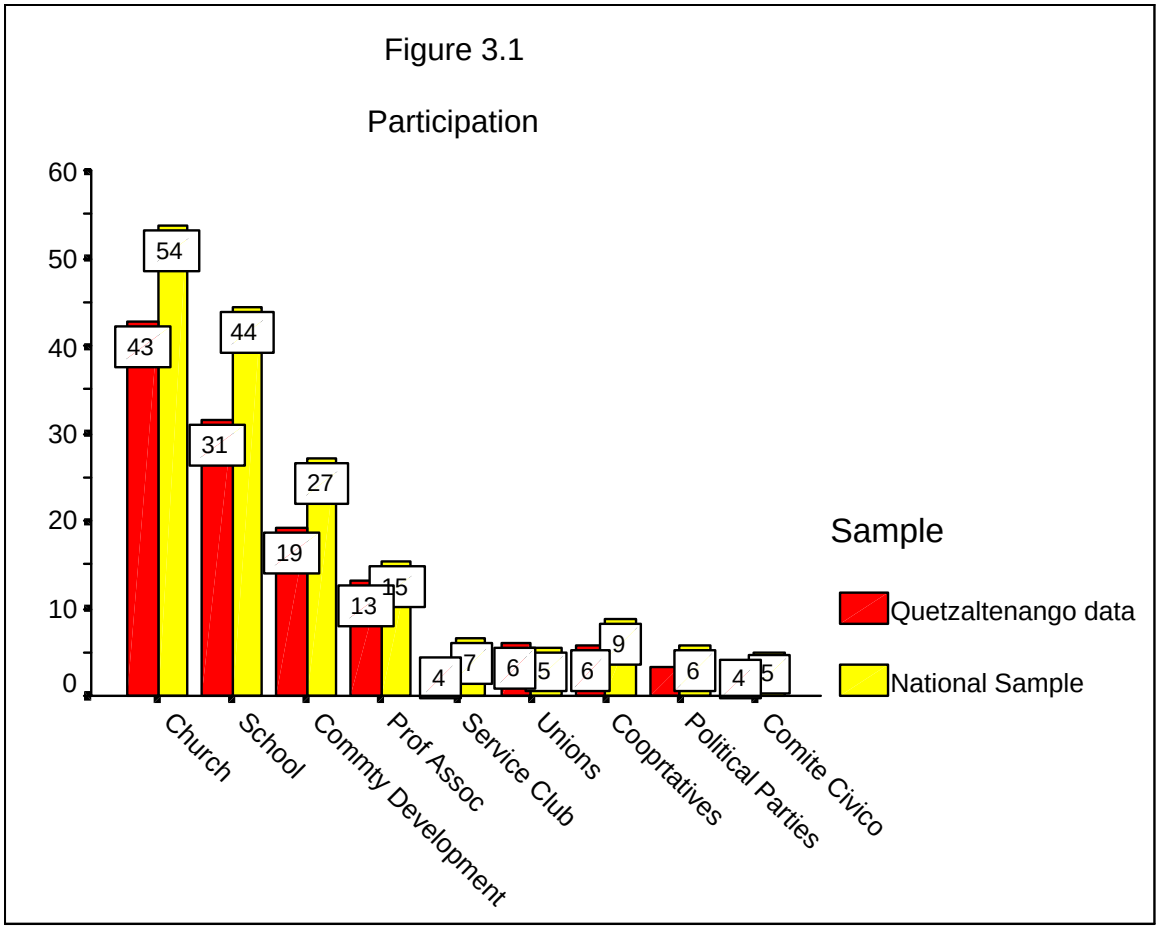
In the three DIMS national surveys we asked our respondents if they participated in various distinct forms of civil society organizations. In 1993 we asked about seven such types of organizations, and in 1995 and 1997 broadened those to include two additional forms. As discussed in our report on the 1997 results[2], the overall impression of comparing the results of the three surveys is one of stability rather than major change. There was some statistically significant increase in the amount of participation in school-related and community development organizations. There was also some upward and downward change in the level of church-related participation between 1993 and 1997, and a significant decline in the professional association participation. There was also a consistently large variation in the amount of participation across the groups included in the survey each year, but with the relative amount of participation among the groups staying the same from year to year.

Figure 3.1 compares the results of the 1997 national level survey to the results from the survey in Quetzaltenango. Respondents were asked whether they attended meetings of each of these groups “frequently”, “sometimes”, or “not at all”. Figure 4.1 shows the percentage in each of the populations that at least sometimes attended meetings of these groups.

Two points are immediately clear from the figure. First, the level of participation in Quetzaltenango is consistently less than in the country as a whole. In virtually every group, the percentage of the population of Quetzaltenango that participates is either less than, or the same as, the percentage of the national level sample. Even in the case of labor union participation, with six percent of the population of Quetzaltenango participating as opposed to five percent in the country overall, the difference is not statistically significant. Assessments of efforts to increase citizen involvement in civil society organizations need to recognize this difference in the baseline between Quetzaltenango and the country as a whole.

Second, the pattern of participation is virtually the same. Both nationally and in the Department of Quetzaltenango, participation is greatest in church related organizations, followed by school groups and then community development organizations. Also, professional associations and cooperatives are the next in order of frequency of participation in both of the national and Quetzaltenango populations.

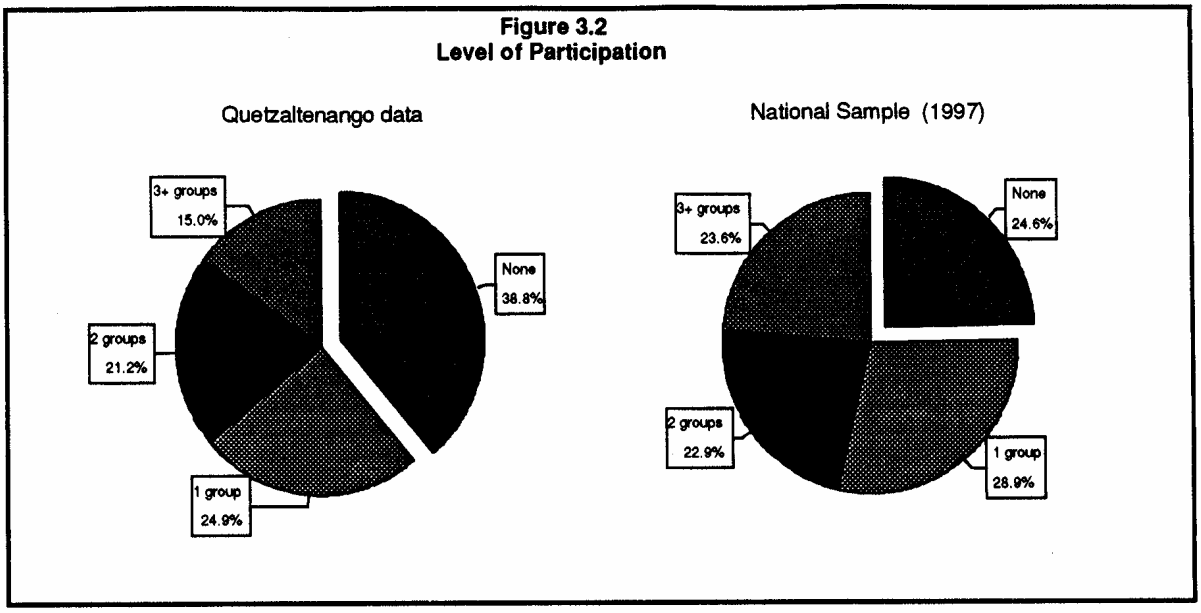
[2]Seligson and Young. *op. cit.* 1998.



Looking at the same information from the perspective the number of different types of groups in which people participate, we again find the level of participation in Quetzaltenango to be lower than in Guatemala as a whole. On average the residents of Quetzaltenango participate in 1.3 different groups, and the average number for the entire Guatemalan population is 1.7 groups. While this is a statistically significant difference (<.01), again showing the lower level of participation in Quetzaltenango, it may be more meaningful to conclude that in both populations the typical person is somewhat involved in at least one civil society organization but is unlikely to be involved with more than two.

From a slightly different perspective, the charts in figure 3.2 show that about 25 percent of the population of Guatemala is not involved with any of these nine types of groups, while that is true for 39 percent of the population of Quetzaltenango. At the other extreme, both samples show there to be about one percent of their respective populations that are active in all nine types of organizations, with only 12 percent of the national population and 7 percent of the population of Quetzaltenango active in four groups or more.

Figure 3.2
Level of Participation



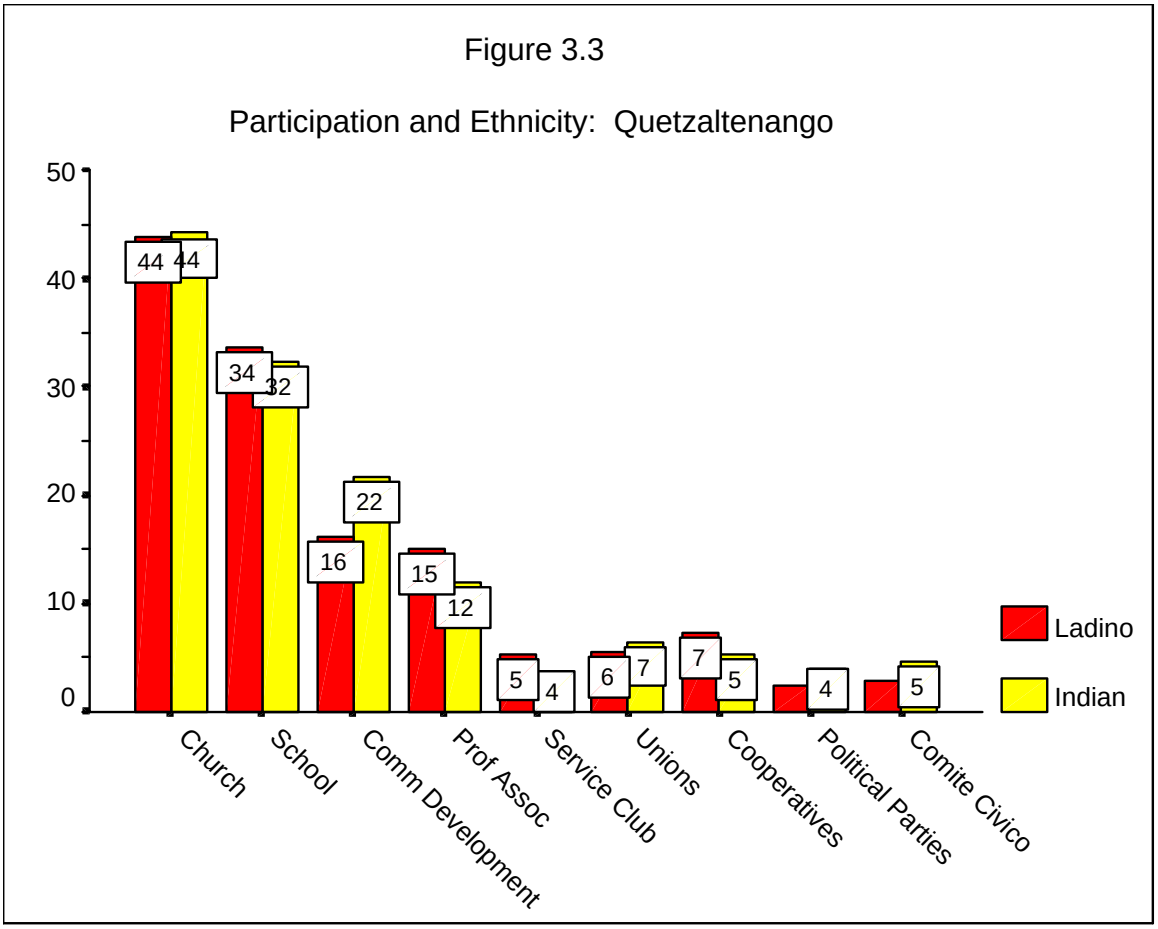
To investigate the Quetzaltenango population further, we looked at the types and levels of participation by gender and ethnicity. We also assessed the relationship between level of participation and age, education and relative wealth.

The participation of the Ladino and indigenous segments of the population of Quetzaltenango are shown in figure 3.3. Essentially, there is no difference between the two. While proportionately fewer Ladinos than Indians indicated they participated in community development organizations, the difference was not statistically significant. Similarly, when we looked at the average number of groups in which the two segments of the population participates, no significant difference was found (1.3 groups in both cases).

There are, however, significant differences in the participation of men and women. As figure 3.4 shows, women participate significantly less in community development organizations, unions, and cooperatives than do men. In the one area in which the figure shows a higher level of participation (school-related organizations), the difference between men and women is not statistically significant. Thus, it is not surprising that when we looked at the number of groups in which men and women participate, overall, we found women to participate significantly less (an average of 1.1 versus 1.5 groups).

Figure 3.3

Participation and Ethnicity: Quetzaltenango



When we looked at participation in Quezaltenango in relationship to age, education and relative wealth, we found no relationship between age or wealth and the number of groups in which people participate. We did, however, find a statistically significant relationship between participation and education (r=.56). As figure 3.5, shows the more highly educated members of the population participate more than those with less education, even though there is essentially no difference in the level of education of those who participate in one or two groups and those who do not participate at all .

Participation in Community Groups: Conceptually, the nine forms of civil society participation can be divided into three categories: community groups (church, school, and community development organizations and service clubs); occupational groups (professional associations, unions, and cooperatives); and political organizations (political parties and *comites civicos*). Results of a factor analysis of the national level data reinforce these conceptual distinctions.

Figure 3.4

Participation and Gender: Quetzaltenango

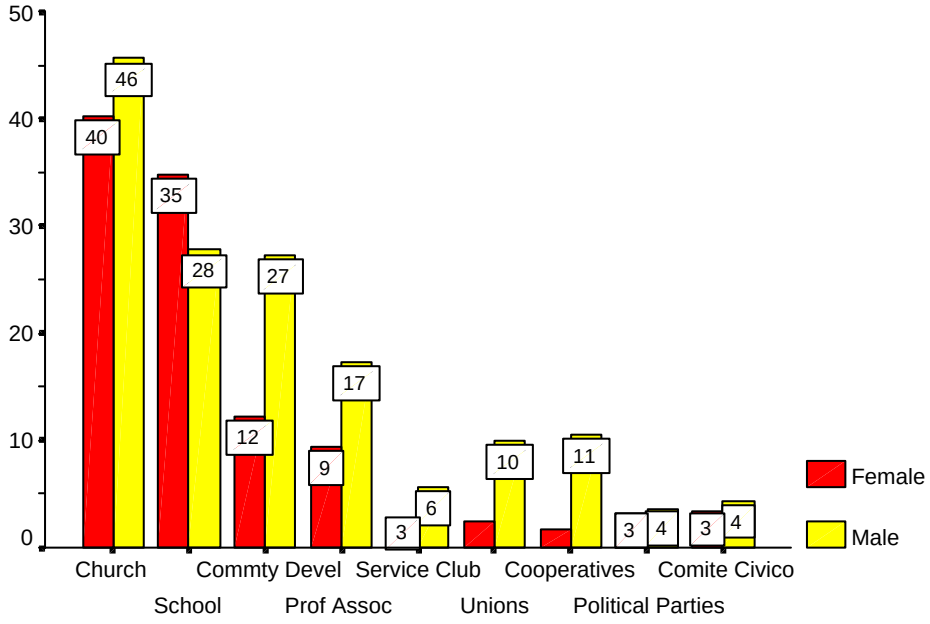
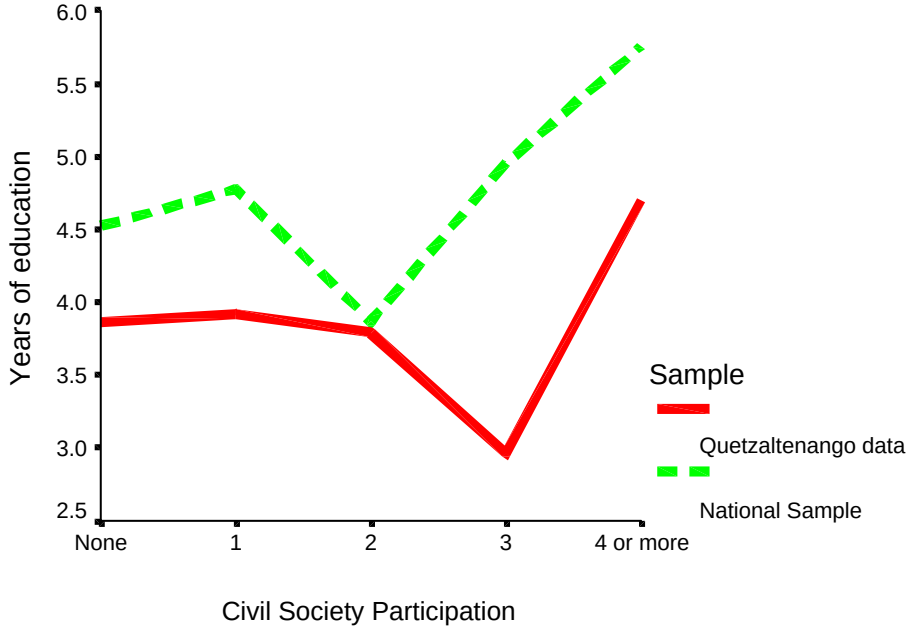


Figure 3.5

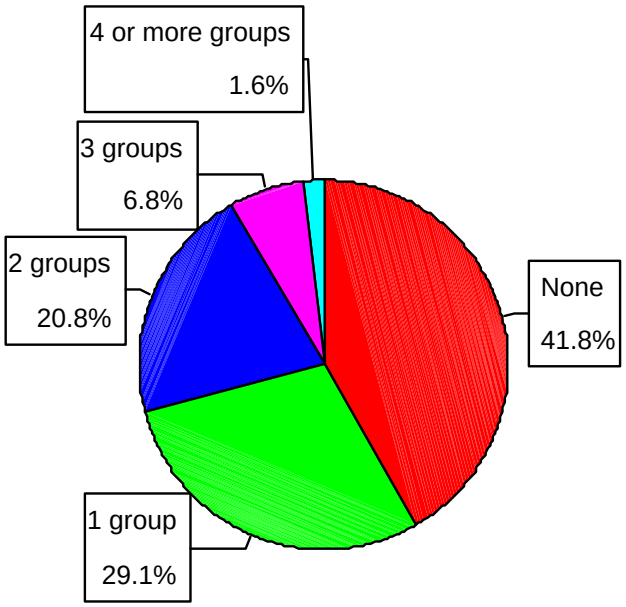
Civil Society Participation and Education



As figure 3.6 shows, 42 percent of the population of Quetzaltenango is not involved in any of the four types of community groups. This compares to 26 percent for the full population of Guatemala. Again we see that the residents of Quetzaltenango are considerably less involved in the organizational life of their communities than residents of the country as a whole.

Figure 3.6

Participation in Community Groups: Quetzaltenango



Looking at the level of involvement in these types of groups from the perspective of gender or ethnicity, we found no significant differences between males and females or between Ladinos and the Indian population. Also, there was not a significant correlation between participation in these four types of community groups and age, education or relative wealth. The explanation for why some people participate and others do not lies in factors other than these.

Participation in occupationally-related groups: The level of involvement in the three occupationally related groups — professional associations, cooperatives and labor

unions - is low throughout Guatemala. Table 3.1 shows the percentage of the populations in Quetzaltenango and in the country as a whole that belong to one or more such groups. As the table shows, 82 percent of the adult population of Quetzaltenango belongs to no such group. Although a somewhat higher percentage than for the entire population, the difference between the two is not statistically significant.

Table 3.1
Occupational Participation

Occupational Participation	Quetzaltenango Sample	National Sample
0	82	78
1	12	16
2	3	4
3	2	2

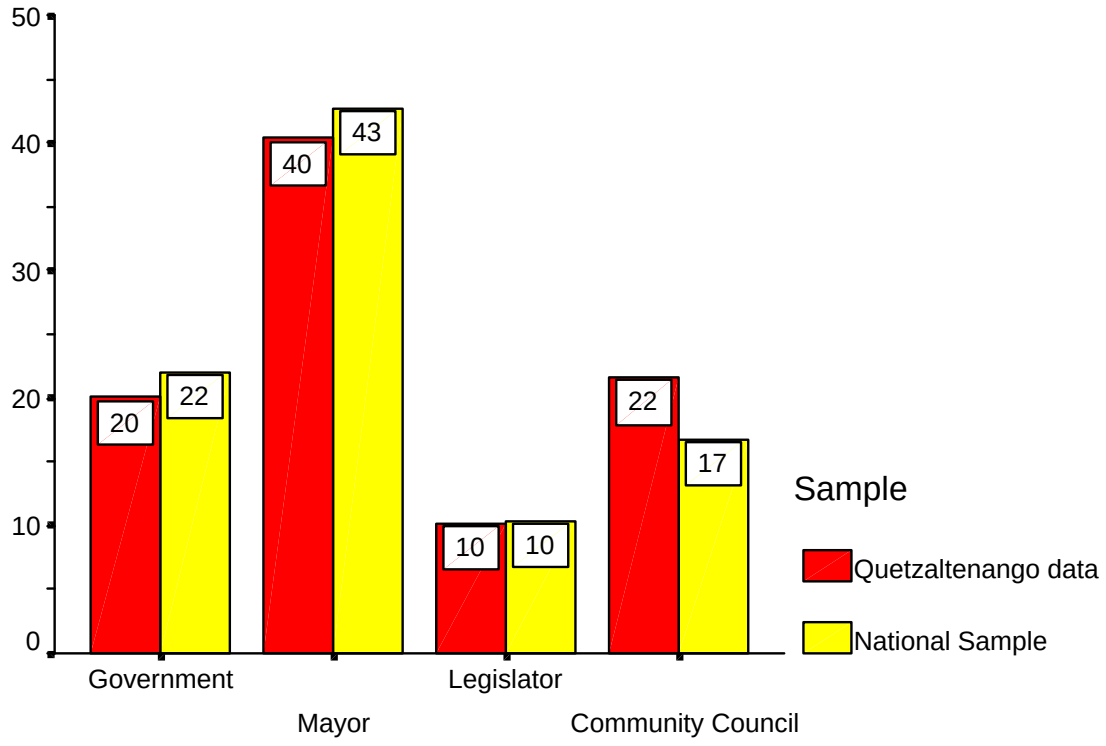
Political participation: Participation in community or occupationally related groups is not the same as political participation. It is quite possible to be involved in church, school or work-related groups without any explicit involvement in the political process at either the local or the national levels. Also, it is quite possible to be politically involved without being active in any organized group. Thus, as well as asking about attendance at meetings of political parties or *comites civicos*, the Guatemala surveys contained several other indicators of the manner and extent to which the public was politically involved. These items include asking the government for help, working for a political party or candidate, being registered to vote, and indicating that they had voted in a recent election.

Contacting public officials: One of the most important and direct forms of political participation is contacting public officials, whether for communal or for personal gain. In the 1997 surveys of Quetzaltenango and Guatemala as a whole, the respondents were asked whether, either to resolve a problem of their own or of the community, they had asked for the help of the national government, the mayor of their municipality, their representative to the national Congress, or a local community improvement council or committee. Figure 3.7 shows the percent of the two groups that indicated they had contacted a public official either “a few” or “many” times. As the figure shows, the local mayor is the official most likely to be contacted, both in Quetzaltenango and across the country as a whole. As also suggested in the chart, the pattern of responses is quite similar in the two populations. Residents of Quetzaltenango are, however, somewhat more likely to contact a local community

council or committee for assistance than residents nationwide.[3] It appears that Quetzaltenango residents are more likely to rely on community groups than on their local or national governmental units, but it is unclear whether this is either as an intermediary with a more official governing body or in lieu of relying on the government at all.

Figure 3.7

Contacting Public Officials



***Registration and voting*:** For most North Americans the most widely accepted and understood indicator of democratic political participation is registration and voting in local and national elections. It is important to note that what the DIMS data can say on the topic of registration and voting is based on the analysis of survey data, not the actual numbers persons registered or who vote. Although there is generally a problem of over-reporting with voting data in surveys, such data do provide insight into the values and attitudes of respondents.

[3]Statistically significant at the .05 level.

The surveys indicate that between 70 and 80 percent of the population of Quetzaltenango, and a similar percentage of the country as a whole, are registered to vote, and that a similar percentage of both groups voted in the elections of 1995. Whatever the relationship to actual behavior, from these data we can conclude that there is not a substantial difference between the population of Quetzaltenango and the rest of Guatemala with respect to having a positive view of being registered and voting.

***Attending political party meetings*:** As was previously shown (see figure 3.2), the two types of groups in which people participate the least are political parties and *comites civicos*. Under Guatemalan electoral codes *comites civico*s serve as an opportunity for local political organization. Functionally, these groups serve as local parties that are geographically bound.

Table 3.2 shows the extent to which residents of Quetzaltenango and the country overall participate in either a national level party or a local *comite civico*. As the table shows, less than 1 percent of the population attend meetings of these groups "often", and less than 6 percent even "sometimes" attend one of their meetings.

Table 3.2
Participation in Political Parties

	Do you attend meetings organized by political parties?			**Do you attend meetings organized by *Comites Civicos*?**		
	1 Often	**2 Sometimes**	**3 Never**	**1 Often**	**2 Sometimes**	**3 Never**
Quetzaltenango	.2%	3.1%	96.7%	.7%	3.2%	96.1%
National Sample	.7%	5.0%	94.3%	1.0%	4.0%	95.0%

***Working in a Political Campaign*:** The form of participation demanding the highest level of commitment is actively participating in a political campaign. Less structured or demanding, but still an indicator of engagement and political commitment is trying to convince friends, neighbors or others to vote in a particular way. A third indicator of active engagement is avowed membership in a political party.

Table 3.3 shows the percentage of Guatemalans who indicated participation in one of the three forms of active political activity. In each of the three areas there is a slightly lower level of involvement by the residents of Quetzaltenango by the public overall. The contrast is more clear when we compare the percentage of the two populations that were involved in at least one of the three ways - 33 percent of the total population and 28 percent of the population of Quetzaltenango.

The bottom two rows of table 3.3 make the contrast between Quetzaltenango and the rest of the country more clear in this regard. Of those who indicated they were members of a political party, about half overall (49%), as compared to about a third in Quetzaltenango (35%), indicated they had worked for a party or a candidate in a political campaign. This difference in the level of active, formal involvement contrasts with the similarity in the responses of party members to a question asking whether they had simply tried to convince others of to whom to vote (55 percent for the country and 57 percent in Quetzaltenango).

Table 3.3
Percent of Public who worked in a Political Campaign

		National Sample	Quetzaltenango
a.	Percent registered in a party	9%	8%
b.	Percent who worked in a campaign for a party or a candidate	13	8
c.	Percent who at least sometimes tried to convince others how to vote	26	23
d.	Percent who are party members, or worked in a campaign, or tried to convince others how to vote	33	28
e.	Percent of party members who: worked in a campaign tried to convince others how to vote	 49 55	 35 57

Perceptions of Local Government in Quetzaltenango

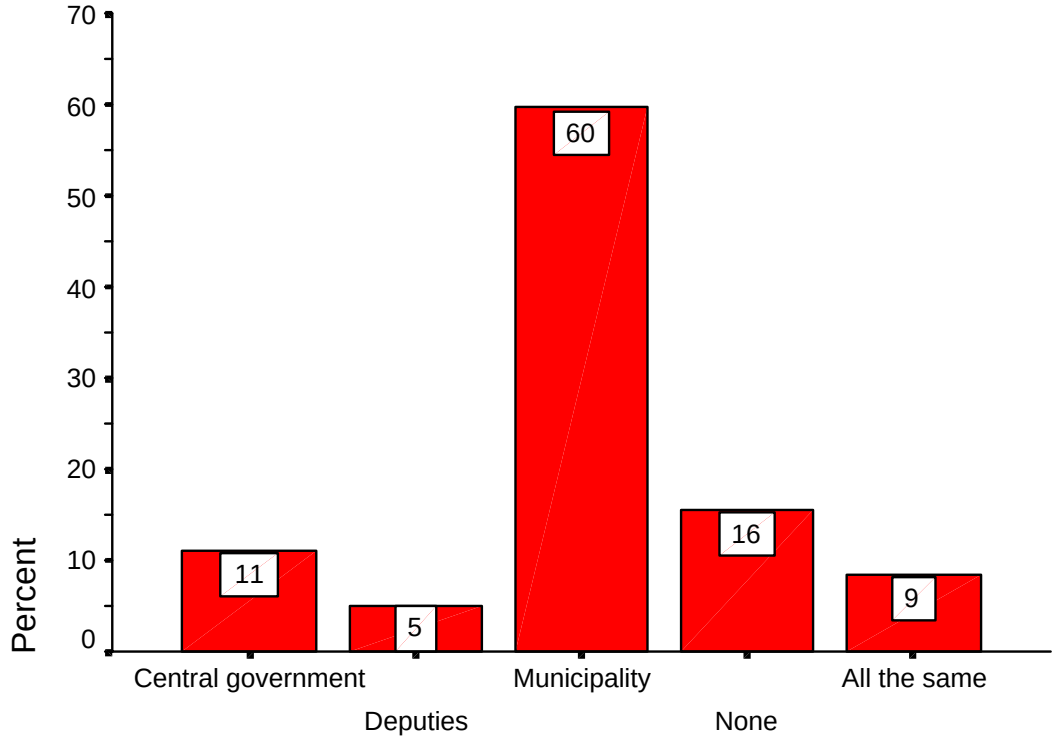
In Guatemala, as in the rest of Latin America, local government has for centuries been a relatively neglected branch of the state. In the analyses of national level data from the DIMS surveys we have found that the Guatemalan people had a strong preference for local-level, as opposed to national-level, government. Indeed, the report on analyses of the 1995 survey concluded that:

Guatemalans are much more likely to contact local government officials for assistance, they believe they are treated better by such officials, and they believe that they are more likely to benefit from their contact with local rather than central government. As has been found in other countries in Central America, in Guatemala citizens satisfied with local government are more likely to be supportive of the national political system.[4]

Specifically, respondents were asked to indicate which unit of government has responded best in trying to help resolve problems of their community: the central government, the representatives to the national Congress, or the municipality. As figure 3.8 shows, in 1997 in Quetzaltenango the population overwhelmingly considered the municipality to be the unit of government that has responded best in resolving

Figure 3.8

Effectiveness in Solving Local Problems: Quetzaltenango



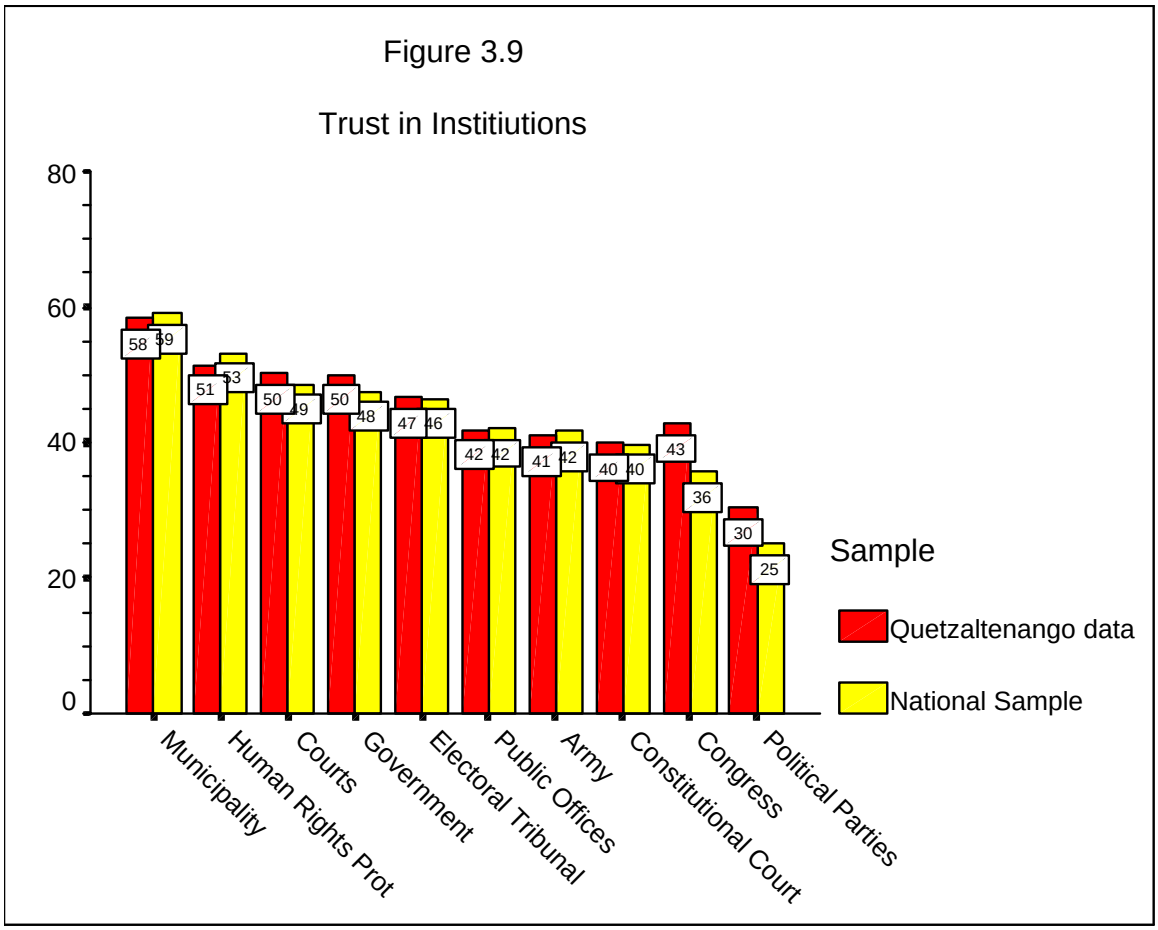
[4]Young and Seligson. *Op. cit.* p. ii.

community problems. In comparison to the country as a whole, where 55 percent of the respondents rated the municipal level as best, we find that residents of Quetzaltenango hold their local level of government in particularly high regard.

Thus, in Quetzaltenango, as in the rest of Guatemala, it is not surprising that local government is the most trusted public institution when compared to the 10 institutions covered in the survey. As can been seen in figure 3.9, on a scale of 0 to 100, the responses from the residents of Quetzaltenango and from the national level survey are essentially the same, and in both cases the rating given to the municipal level of government is substantially higher than for any of the rest.

Figure 3.9

Trust in Instituitions

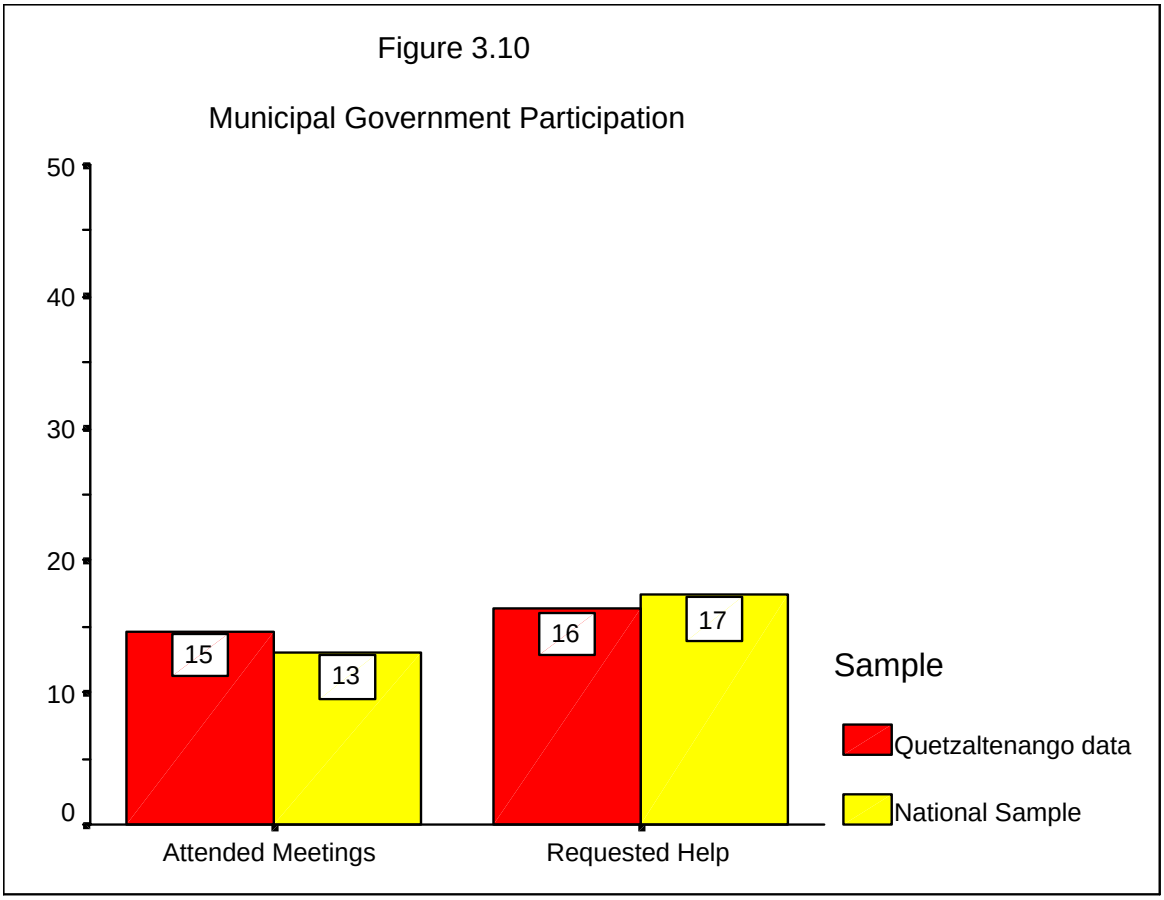


A related series of questions asked about the extent of participation in local government. As figure 3.10 shows, in Quetzaltenango about 15 percent of the people indicate that they attended at least one meeting of their local government during the past

year, and that about 16 percent had requested help from an official or office of their municipality. Looking at the two variables in combination, we find that about 24 percent of the population either attended a meeting or made a request, and that of those that attended meetings, about half (43%) also requested assistance. As figure 3.10 also shows, the pattern of responses from Quetzaltenango is essentially the same as for Guatemala as a whole.

Figure 3.10

Municipal Government Participation



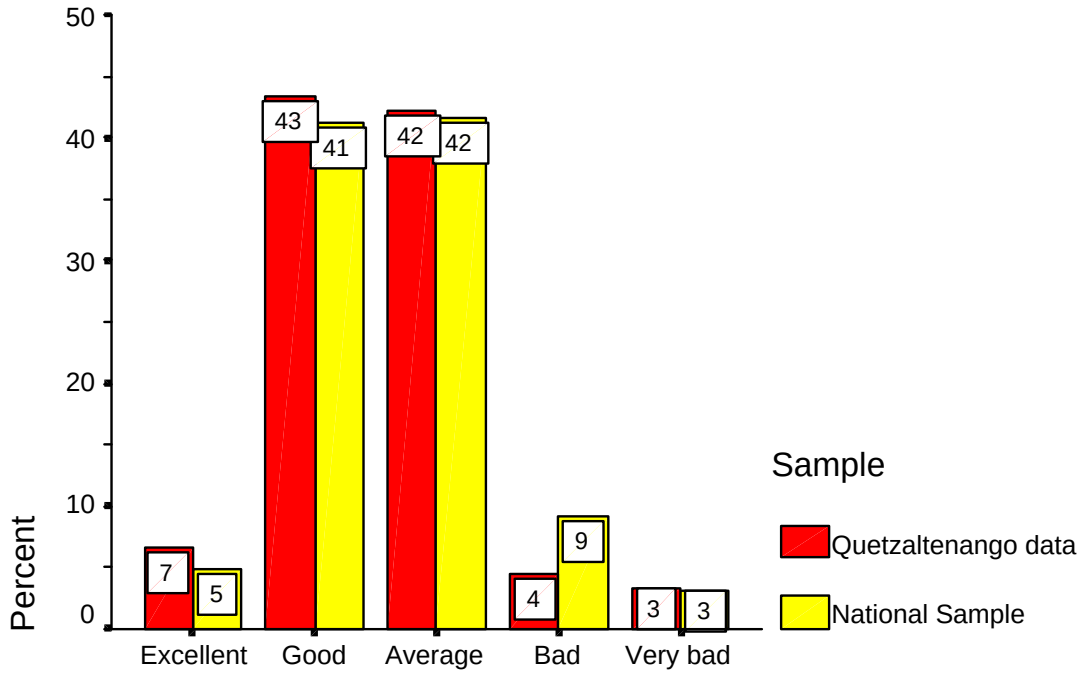
Looking further at the participation variables from Quetzaltenango we also find that there are significant differences on the basis of gender and ethnicity. Men are twice as likely as women to attend municipal government meetings (10 versus 20 percent), and they are also more likely to make requests (13 versus 20 percent). In terms of ethnicity, while Ladinos are twice as likely to attend municipal meetings as Indians (20 versus 10 percent), there is no difference between the two groups with respect to requesting help (16% for both groups).

Consistent with their relatively high level of confidence in the municipal level of government, the residents of Quetzaltenango are reasonably well satisfied with the services their municipalities provide. The same is true for the country as a whole.

Respondents were asked whether they believed that the services their municipality provided to their neighbors were: “excellent”, “good”, “satisfactory” (“*regular”*), “bad”, or “very bad”. As figure 3.11 shows, half of the residents of Quetzaltenango rated their municipal services as “good” (43%) or “excellent” (7%), and another 42 percent rated them as “satisfactory”. As the figure also shows, there is essentially no difference in the ratings for Quetzaltenango and the country overall.

Figure 3.11

Satisfaction with Municipal Services



Is the service provided by your municipality good, average, or bad?

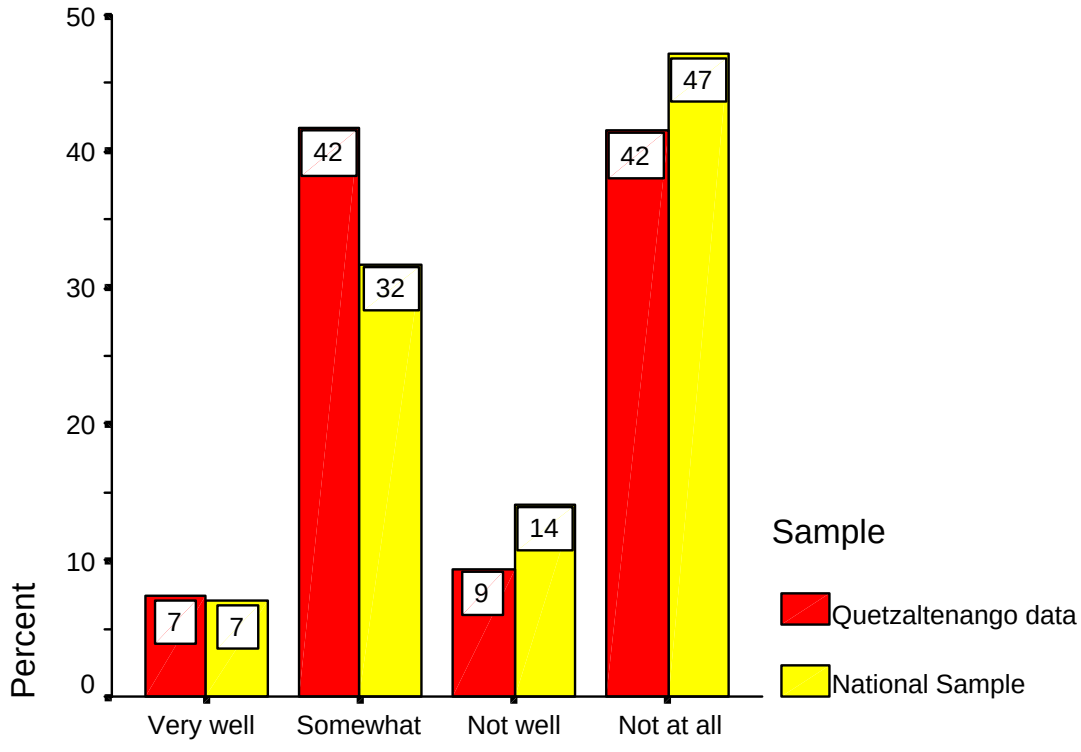
In order to relate the answers regarding satisfaction with municipal services to responses to questions pertaining to the quality of treatment people receive from municipal officials and to their general level of confidence in local government, we converted these responses to our 0 to 100 point scale. From this perspective, the average rating from the residents of Quetzaltenango with respect to satisfaction of services was a 61 and from all of Guatemala a 59. The residents of Quetzaltenango also rated their municipal officials quite highly in terms of the treatment they received. In terms of the 100 point scale, the municipality received a rating of 64. As might be expected, there was a significant positive relationship between satisfaction and quality of

treatment (r=.33). There is also a significant positive correlation between satisfaction with municipal services and confidence in local government overall (r=.27).

A final question in our series on local government dealt with the extent to which municipalities communicate with their citizens. Respondents were asked whether the municipality keeps them "very well informed", "somewhat informed", "not well informed" or "not informed at all" regarding local government activities. Figure 3.12 shows that in Quetzaltenango about half the population feels that their municipal government keeps them "very well" (7%) or at least "somewhat" (42%) informed. On the other hand, over 40 percent report that they are not informed at all.

Figure 3.12

How Well Informed Does the Municipality Keep You?



Converting the responses shown in figure 3.12 to our 0-100 point scale confirms the impression given by the chart that residents of Quetzaltenango feel better informed by the local government than does the populace as a whole. The residents of Quetzaltenango gave their municipal government a rating of 38 on the 100 point scale,

which is significantly higher (<.01) than the rating of 32 given by the population of the country as a whole.

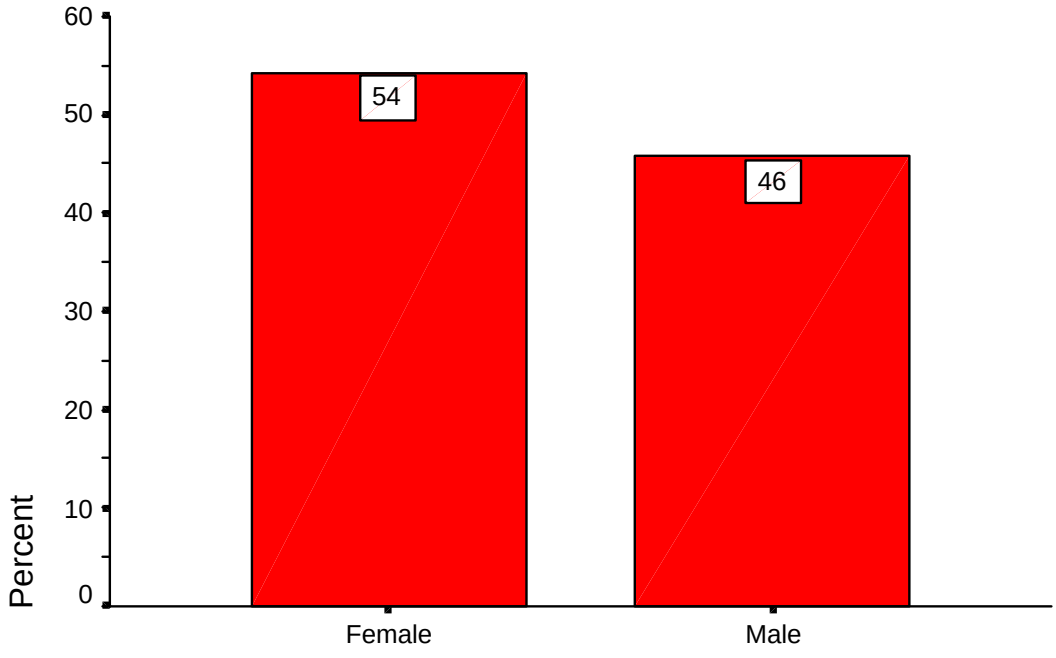
To get a sense of the importance of local government communications, we looked at the relationship between being well informed and perceptions of the quality of service and the general level of support or confidence in local government. In both the national and the Quetzaltenango surveys we found the correlations to be positive and statistically significant (for the national data the r values are .23 between communication and perceived quality of service, and .21 between communications and support; the comparable values for Quetzaltenango are .17 and .19).

Since we found a positive relationship between communications and public support, we looked more closely at the portion of the 42 percent of the population in Quetzaltenango who indicated that they received no information from their local unit of government. Figure 3.13 shows that there is some difference between males and females, with women indicating they are less well informed. Comparing figures 3.13 and 3.14 shows that where people live is a more important factor than gender with respect

Figure 3.13

Citizens Receiving no Information from Local Government by Gender

Quetzaltenango



to communication. More than twice as many residents of rural as opposed to urban areas (31 versus 69 percent) indicate they receive no information from their local government. More important still, however, is ethnicity. Nearly three-quarters (74%) of the Indian population indicated they received no information from their municipal government, whereas this was true for only a quarter of the Ladinos (26%) (see figure 3.15) This all would suggest that efforts to improve the quality of local governance in a way that will be translated by the populace into general political system support should give attention to improving communication with the public, and that particular efforts should be directed toward the indigenous population.

Figure 3.14

Residents Receiving No Information From Local Government

by Urban or Rural Location: Quetzaltenango

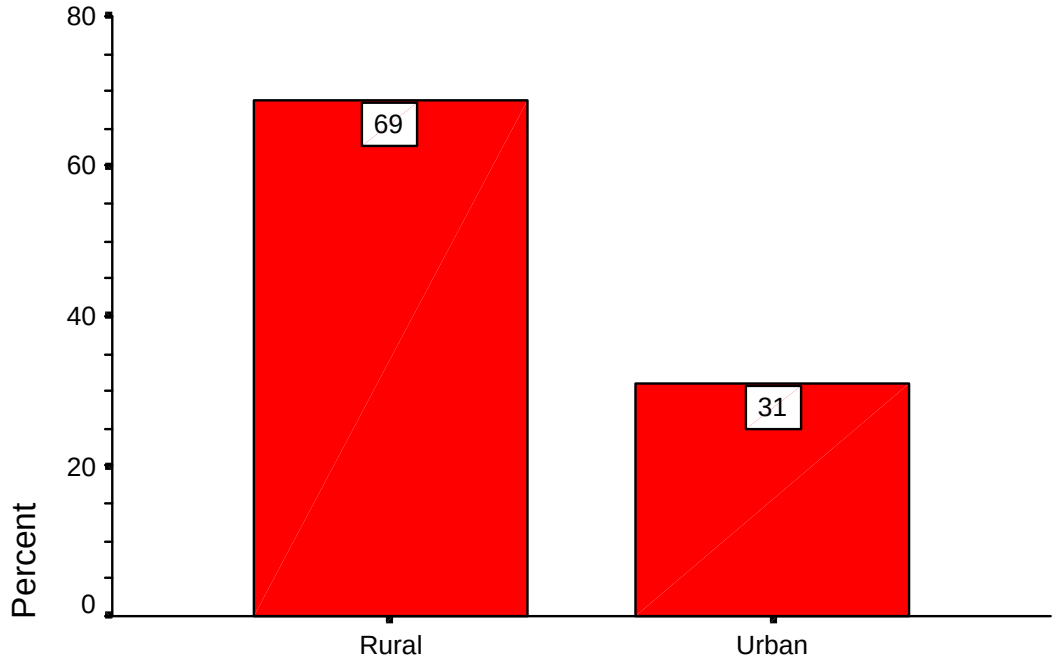
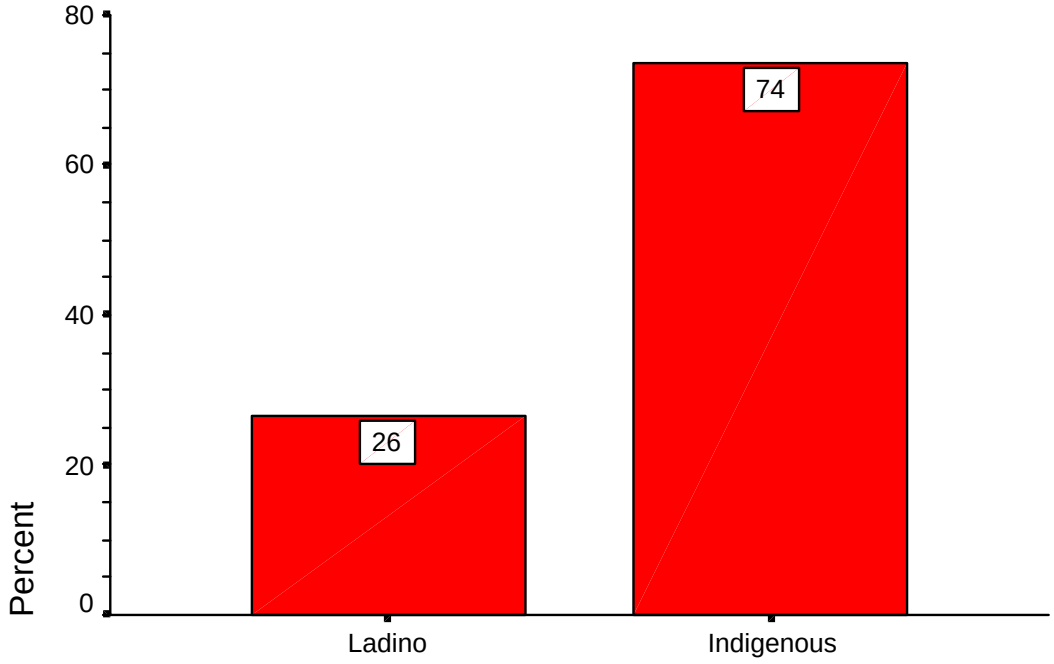


Figure 3.15

Citizens Receiving No Information from Local Government

By Ethnicity: Quetzaltenango



DIMS-CH4.doc/R116

Chapter 4
Perceptions of the Criminal Justice System

Social science theory and empirical studies show that public attitudes regarding the legitimacy of the justice system are positively related to compliance with the law, which is necessary to civil order and efficient governmental operations.[1] Because it most directly and obviously effects almost every member of the population, of particular importance is the criminal justice system, which in Guatemala is generally considered to be composed of the police, the public ministry (*Ministerio Publico*) who employs the public prosecutors (or the district attorneys), and the courts.

Assisting the Government of Guatemala to increase the effectiveness and credibility of its justice system is a high programmatic priority of USAID.[2] A central programmatic feature of the USAID support in the justice arena over the past two years has been the development of a pilot "centro de enfoque" in Quetzaltenango.[3] A "centro de enfoque" is conceived as a physical place and process designed make the reporting and prosecution of crimes more efficient and effective. It is expected to make the process of reporting and prosecution of crimes easier and more transparent from the public's perspective, and more efficient and effective from the point of view of the police, prosecutors and the courts.

It is unlikely that the *centro de enfoque* in Quetzaltenango had been in place long enough by the spring of 1997 for its results to be reflected in the DIMS survey of the general population. Thus, the information presented in this chapter should not be viewed as a preliminary assessment of the effectiveness of this program intervention, but rather as providing a baseline against which progress can be measured in the years ahead. Highlights of our findings in this regard include:

- In Quetzaltenango, as elsewhere, most people believe the justice system is slow. The public also believes it is difficult to report a crime to the police or other justice system official; and respondents with the most exposure to the system are the most likely to find it difficult to report a crime.

---

[1] Tom R. Tyler. *Why People Obey the Law*. Yale University Press. New Haven, CT. 1990. P. 58 and *passim*.

[2] USAID strategic objectives for Guatemala.

[3] A second pilot "Centro de Enfoque" has also been established in the Department of Zalapa. It was started after the one in Quetzaltenango and had not been in operation to a significant degree by the time of the survey in the spring of 1997.

- The justice system is widely perceived to be unfair. Most of the population believes the system favors Ladinos over Indians, and the rich and powerful over the rest of the population.

- About 70 percent of the population of Quetzaltenango believes justice will most likely be obtained from the police and courts; about 20 percent believe it will most likely come from community leaders; and about 10 percent believe in taking justice into their own hands.

- There is a positive relationship between how the people believe they are treated by the police, public ministry, and the courts, and their confidence in the justice system. There is also a positive relationship between how they are treated by the justice system and their support for the political system overall.

Number and Characteristics of Victims of Crimes

Respondents in both surveys were asked whether at any time during the past 12 months they, or a member of their family, had been the victim of a robbery, assault or kidnapping. As table 4.1 shows, almost twice as many respondents in the national survey as in Quetzaltenango indicated that they or a family member had been a victim of crime (12 percent in Quetzaltenango as opposed to 22 percent nationally). As discussed in the report of the 1997 national survey, the national level figures are heavily influenced by the population of metropolitan Guatemala City, where almost half of the population (47%) reported they or a family member had been a victim.[4] Excluding the metropolitan region, the percent for the country is still slightly higher than in Quetzaltenango; that is, 12 percent for Quetzaltenango as compared to 16 percent for the combination of the four non-metropolitan regions of the country.

[4] Seligson and Young. *Op. cit. p. iii-3.*

Table 4.1
Victims of Crime*

	Percent of Population
Quetzaltenango	12%
All Guatemala	22
Metropolitan Guatemala City	47
Rest of Guatemala	16

**Percent responding they or a family member had been the victim of a robbery, assault or kidnapping in the past 12 months.*

Table 4.2 compares several characteristics of crime victims to similar characteristics of persons who indicated neither they nor a family member had been the victim of a crime. As the table shows, about half the victims are Indians (46%), over half the victims are male (58%), and nearly three quarters live in an urban area (74%). Compared to non-victims, the average victim is about the same age, slightly better educated, and more likely to be male, to be Ladino, and to live in an urban area.

Table 4.2
Selected Characteristics of Crime Victims in Quetzaltenango

	Victim	Non-Victim
Average Age	38.4	37.3 years
Average Level of Education	6.0	3.5 years
Percent Male	58%	44%
Percent Urban	74%	42%
Percent Indigenous (Self-identification)	46%	67%

To gain a better understanding of characteristics associated with being a victim, we analyzed the data using logistic regression techniques. Specifically, we sought to determine if the following were significant predictors of being a victim of crime: gender, age, level of education, relative wealth, ethnicity, urban versus rural location, and extent of participation in civil society organizations. The results of the analyses indicate that

wealth and location were significant predictors. Respondents who are relatively more wealthy than others are more likely to be victims, as are residents from the urban areas in the Department.

We also looked at the relationship between indicating that respondents or a member of their family had been the victim of a crime and their overall level of confidence in the justice system. On the 100 point scale reflecting the level of confidence in the system, in Quetzaltenango the average rating from victims is 46 and from non-victims it is 51. Statistically, this is not a significant difference, but that may be because the number of victims in the Quetzaltenango sample was fairly small (12 percent of the sample of 410 persons, or 48 individuals). Since the difference between victims and non-victims in the larger, national sample is in the same direction (a rating of 40 from victims and 51 from non-victims) and much more clear and statistically significant (sig. <.001) , it is reasonable to conclude that a larger sample in Quetzaltenango would have produced essentially the same result.

That victims have less confidence in the system than non-victims may, at first glance, seem so obvious as to be unimportant. From the victim's perspective, the justice system clearly has failed to deter the perpetrator of the crime. Furthermore, subsequent interactions with the police and courts may have been unsatisfying and lowered a victim's confidence in the system's effectiveness still more. On the other hand, from a programmatic perspective the difference may have important implications. While the root causes of crime in Guatemala, and hence the ability to have a serious impact with respect to deterrence or prevention, may be well beyond the purview of justice system improvement programs, it is reasonable to expect such programs to affect the confidence of the public in the police and prosecutorial arms of the system.

Accessibility and Speed of the System

As one set of indicators of how Guatemalans perceive the criminal justice system, we asked the public about the ease with which they could bring a complaint to the police or the courts, and about the speed with which the system of justice moved. As table 4.3 shows, in both Quetzaltenango and the country as a whole about three-quarters of the population (72 and 73 percent) indicate they believe the system moves slowly, with another fifth of the population (23 and 19 percent) indicating that they do not know.

Table 4.3
Perceived Speediness of the Courts
(Percent)

	Quetzaltenango Data	National Sample
1. Efficient	5%	8%
2. Slow	72	73
7. Don't know	23	19

Of the 12 percent of people in Quetzaltenango who indicated that they or a member of their family had been the victim of a crime within the past year, about half (50%) indicated they had reported the crime to the legal authorities, as compared to 39 percent of similar respondents from the national survey. Of that relatively small number of respondents[5], only 1 percent indicated the system moved quickly, while 93 percent of those who had direct knowledge of the system as a result of a crime effecting themselves or a family member responded that they believed the system moved slowly. The comparable numbers from the national data are 7 and 78 percent. While the number of responses from Quetzaltenango is too small to permit concluding that there is a statistically significant difference between the Department and the country overall, the data do suggest that the problems with the system may be more serious in Quetzaltenango than in many other locations.

Another contributor to the public's view of the system is the perceived difficulty of reporting a crime to the proper authorities. In the 1997 survey respondents were asked whether reporting a crime to the police, a judge or other authority was easy, difficult or very difficult. As shown in table 4.4, in Quetzaltenango 18 percent of the population of the Department indicate they think that reporting a crime is easy. This compares with 28 percent for the Guatemalan population overall, and could be interpreted to suggest that there are more difficulties in Quetzaltenango than elsewhere. However, the table also shows that 57 percent of the respondents in Quetzaltenango indicate that reporting a crime is difficult or very difficult. This compares to 68 percent of respondents from all of Guatemala who indicate they believe reporting would be difficult. From this second perspective it appears it is easier to report a crime in Quetzaltenango than in the country overall. The key to explaining the apparent contradiction lies in the proportions of the populations who did not respond. In Quetzaltenango, 24 percent say they have no opinion, while nationally only 11 percent say they do not know. The substantially

[5]Of the 420 respondents in the survey, 48 (12%) indicated they or a family member were a victim; 24 (6%) indicated the crime had been reported; and of those who reported, only 1 (1.2%) indicated the judicial process moved quickly.

larger proportion of people responding "don't know" from Quetzaltenango is consistent with the finding in chapter 3 that a large proportion of the population does not feel well informed by their government.

The lack of communication may also explain the results of comparing responses from the population of the Department as a whole with those from the subgroups of Quetzaltenango respondents who are most likely to have had direct contact with the justice system. Unlike the national level population, in which there is essentially no difference between the general population and the other two groups shown in table 4.4[6], in Quetzaltenango the difference between the population at large and those who probably have had some direct exposure to the system is clear. Of those who indicate they or a family member has been a victim of crime, 23 percent indicate they thought the process was "easy", while 72 percent said it was "difficult" or "very difficult". Those with the most exposure to the system are much more likely (72 versus 57 percent) to believe that reporting a crime is difficult.

Table 4.4
Ease of Reporting a Crime in Quetzaltenango
(Percent)

	Entire Population	Victims of Crime	Users of System*
Easy	18%	23%	26%
Difficult	45	61	58
Very Difficult	12	11	8
Don't Know	25	5	8

* *Those who indicated they or a family member had been the victim of a crime in the past 12 months and that the crime had been reported.*

To investigate whether any of several personal characteristics were associated with respondent's perceptions of the ease of reporting a crime or the speed of the courts, we conducted several regression analyses. Specifically, we considered gender, age, education level, relative wealth, ethnicity, participation in civil society organizations, and urban versus rural location. From the analyses of both the national and the Quetzaltenango respondents we found few relationships between these variables and either ease of reporting or speediness of the courts.

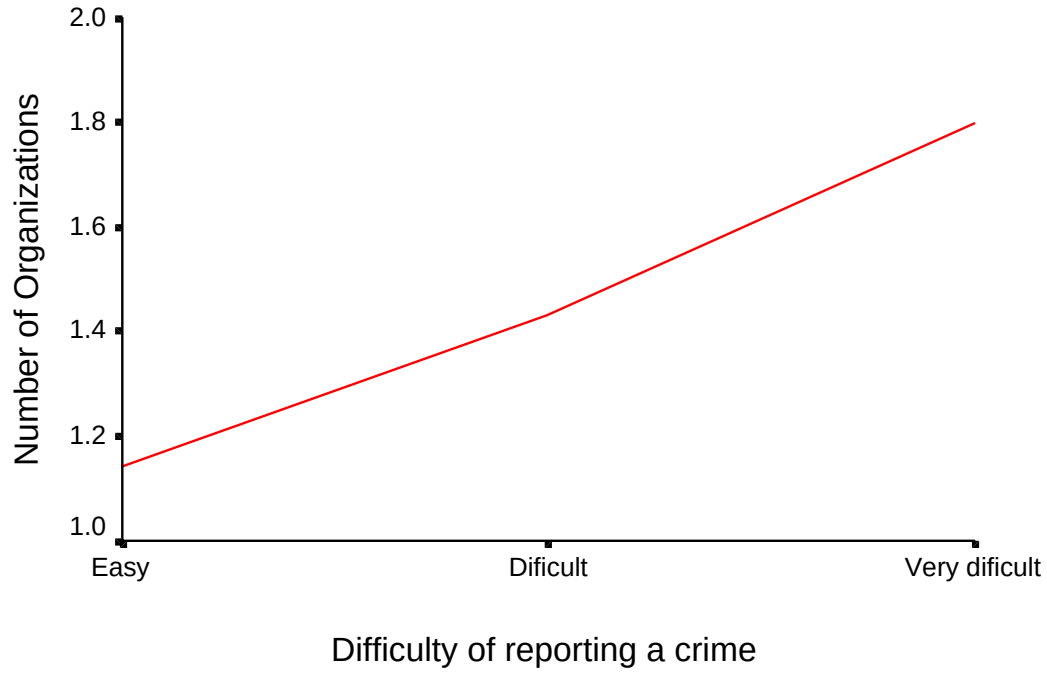
[5]See table 111.5 (p. Iii-7) of the draft 1997 report.

In Quetzaltenango, there was a significant relationship between the perceived difficulty of reporting a crime and respondents' participation in civil society organizations. As figure 4.1 shows, being active in civil society organizations is a significant predictor of believing that it is difficult to report a crime. Since people who are active in civil society organizations are more likely to be better informed than persons who are not, in Quetzaltenango it appears that the persons who are the most likely to have the best insight into the operations of the system are those who are most likely to believe it to be difficult for the public to use.

Figure 4.1

Civil Society Participation and Ease of Reporting a Crime

in Quetzaltenango



Fairness of Procedures

As discussed in the report on the 1997 national survey, a very important book on public opinion and the legal system was published by Tom R. Tyler in 1990 (Why People Obey the Law). Tyler's work shows that people's views about the legitimacy of the justice system are heavily based on their perception of the fairness of its procedures, especially their assessment that the procedures followed by the police and the courts are fair.

The literature identifies three aspects of procedural fairness as being particularly important. People should feel as though: (1) they have an opportunity to participate by presenting their interpretation of crucial events to authorities who will base their decisions on facts rather than the personal benefits that may accrue to decision-makers; (2) the decision-making process is neutral with respect to groups in which they are members; and (3) they have been treated politely and helpfully by persons in authority.

As an indication of people's sense that their views would be heard and assessed on their merits, the survey asked: "Do you believe that persons such as you are treated with justice when you have to resolve something with a judge or the courts?" The results from the two surveys are shown in table 4.5. First, from the table we see there are many more persons from Quetzaltenango than in the country overall indicating that they had no basis for an opinion (44 versus 30 percent). This may be a reflection of the lack of communication between the population of the Department and the government. Comparing the two groups who did respond, we see that in both Quetzaltenango and in the rest of the country about a fifth of the population (21%) believes that people are justly treated. In Quetzaltenango about the same proportion (19%) believe they are not justly treated, with about 29 percent of the national sample saying that people like themselves are not treated justly even some of the time.

Table 4.5
Belief that People are Treated Justly
by the Courts

Quality of Treatment	Percent of those Responding		Percent of All Respondents	
	Quetzaltenango Survey	National Survey	Quetzaltenango Survey	National Survey
Justly Treated	21%	21%	12%	14%
Sometimes Justly Treated	60	50	33	35
Not Justly Treated	19	29	11	21
Don't Know	n/a	n/a	44	30

A related pair of questions asked members of the public to indicate the extent to which they believed various organizations defended citizens' rights. Specifically, they were asked whether the police and the courts respected and defended the right to life of Guatemalans. Table 4.6 summarizes the results for the two surveys. As the table shows, there is far from a strong endorsement of the police and the courts, and the perception of the police and the courts as defenders of Guatemalans' rights is lower in Quetzaltenango than in the country as a whole.[7] In Quetzaltenango, only about 20 percent of the population gives an unqualifiedly positive response with respect to either the police or the courts.

[7] About 10 percent of the respondents in both surveys indicated they did not know enough to respond to these questions. There was not a significant difference in the proportions of non-respondents between the two surveys.

Table 4.6
Extent to which Police and Courts are Perceived as Respecting and Defending Citizen's Rights
(Percent)

	Quetzaltenango Survey	National Survey
Police		
Defend rights	18%	26%
Sometimes defend	40	34
Do not defend	42	40
Courts		
Defend rights	21	30
Sometimes defend	35	26
Do not defend	44	44

Both of the surveys also contained questions to assess the extent to which people believe that decision-making is neutral with respect to the ethnic or economic group to which they belong. Regarding ethnicity, the public was asked whether they believed that the police or the courts treated the indigenous population better, worse or the same as the non-indigenous (Ladino) population. As table 4.6 shows, the responses are quite different from Quetzaltenango than from the country as a whole. In Quetzaltenango, some 62 percent of the population believes the police treat the Indian population worse than the Ladinos, and about half the population has the same feeling of inequality with respect to the courts.

Table 4.7
Relative Treatment of Indians to Ladinos by Police and Courts
(Percent)

	Quetzaltenango Survey	National Survey
Police		
Favor Ladinos	62%	51%
Favor Indians	3	2
Treat the same	35	47
Courts		
Favor Ladinos	54	45
Favor Indians	5	2
Treat the same	41	53

Not surprisingly, the perceptions of Ladinos and Indians in Quetzaltenango with respect to equality of treatment differs substantially. Close to half of the Ladinos indicate they think the treatment between the two groups is about the same (43 percent from the police and 49 percent from the courts). The Indian respondents, on the other hand, were much more likely to respond that Ladinos were better treated. Only 29 percent of the Indians said they were treated equally by the police and 34 by the courts.

With respect to economic status and the justice system, the surveys included a question that asked whether the courts favored the rich and powerful. The public was given the opportunity to respond: “yes”, “not always”, “no”, and “I don’t know”. Of those expressing a view, more than three-quarters of Guatemalans believe that the courts consistently favor the rich and powerful, and in both Quetzaltenango and the country as a whole only about 6 percent indicate that this is not at least sometimes the case.

Table 4.8
Relative Treatment of Rich and Powerful by Courts

	Quetzaltenango Survey	National Survey
Favor the rich	64%	68%
Sometimes favor the rich	15	11
Do not favor the rich	6	5
Don't know	15	16

The third critical aspect of procedural justice is people's feelings about how they are treated. Whether people are treated in a polite and helpful manner is an indication to them of the extent to which they, and their points of view, are respected. Being treated with a lack of respect and helpfulness is an indication that the individual, or the group to which they belong, are unimportant, and therefore unlikely to receive a fair hearing.

To determine the extent to which the public believes they are being treated with respect, we asked separately about the police, the courts, and the staff of the public ministry, how the respondent had been treated. People were asked whether they were treated "very well", "well", "poorly" "very poorly", or "about average or as they would expect" ("regular"). Table 4.9 provides a summary of the results. As the table shows, in Quetzaltenango almost half the respondents (46%) indicated did not have enough exposure to the police to answer the question, over half (57%) did not respond about the courts, and almost three-quarters (70%) did not respond about the Public Ministry. This is a substantially higher level of non-response than for the country as a whole.

Of the respondents in both surveys who did feel they could respond, most indicated they were treated at least fairly well. Of those providing a response in Quetzaltenango, 22 percent indicated they were treated badly or very badly by the police, and 15 percent gave similar rating to the courts and the Public Ministry. These are essentially the same negative ratings as given by the country as a whole (25 percent for police, 15 percent for courts, and 16 percent for Public Ministry).

Table 4.9
Treatment by the Police, Courts and Public Ministry
(Percent)

	Quetzaltenango Survey			National Survey		
	Police	**Courts**	**Public Ministry**	**Police**	**Courts**	**Public Ministry**
Very Well	3%	1%	2%	4%	3%	2%
Well	23	23	16	25	28	19
Fairly Well	16	12	7	19	16	9
Poor	10	6	4	13	7	5
Very Poor	2	1	1	4	2	1
No Response*	46	57	70	35	44	64

***** *The non-response to these questions (from 95 to 100%) is almost entirely an indication that the respondent did not have enough exposure to the system to respond.*

Satisfaction with Outcomes

Tyler and other researchers have found that the public's perception of procedural fairness is a particularly important factor in their assessment of the legitimacy of the justice system. But this does not mean that the public's satisfaction with the outcomes of the system will not be important as well. Indeed, it seems reasonable to presume that satisfaction with outcomes of encounters with the system would be at least as important as the quality of the treatment that one receives.

To assess this assumption the 1997 questionnaire included an item asking respondents to think in terms of complaints that they or a member of their family had brought to the police or a member of the judiciary and then to indicate whether they were "very satisfied", "somewhat satisfied", or "unsatisfied" with the results that they obtained.

Table 4.10 shows the results for the general public overall, and for those individuals who indicated that they personally had made a complaint to the police or another member of the justice system. As the table shows, those who have had the most recent and direct exposure with the system are those who are least satisfied with the results; about a third (33%) of those who had ever made a complaint and nearly two-thirds (64%) of those who had made a complaint within the past year were not satisfied with the outcome. These results from Quetzaltenango are quite similar to those for the country as a whole (38 percent and 58 percent, respectively).

Table 4.10
Satisfaction with Results of Contacting
Police or Judges
(Percent Quetzaltenango)

	General Public	Ever made a Complaint	Made a Complaint in Last 12 months
Very Satisfied	8%	19%	20%
Somewhat Satisfied	18	48	16
Not Satisfied	13	33	64
Don't know	61	--	--

A different sort of indicator of the public's assessment of the outcomes of the system are the responses to a question about their reliance on the police and the courts as opposed to possible alternative sources of justice. A question along these lines was added to the 1997 questionnaire because of the sharp increase in crime that occurred during 1996 and a corresponding concern about a possible rise of vigilantism and the breakdown of public order. Specifically, respondents were asked whether, if a crime was committed in their community, justice would be obtained through the police and the courts, or through leaders from the community, family or friends of the victim, or by the victim him or herself.

As table 4.11 shows, in both Quetzaltenango and Guatemala as a whole close to three- quarters of the population believe justice is most likely to come from the police and the courts, and in both cases a little over 10 percent (11 and 12 percent, respectively) believe that justice is best served by some sort of vigilante-type of response. The area of greatest difference between Quetzaltenango and the country overall is with respect to reliance on community leaders. Nearly a fifth of the population (17%) of Quetzaltenango believes that justice will most likely be obtained from that source.

Table 4.11
Most Likely Source of Justice

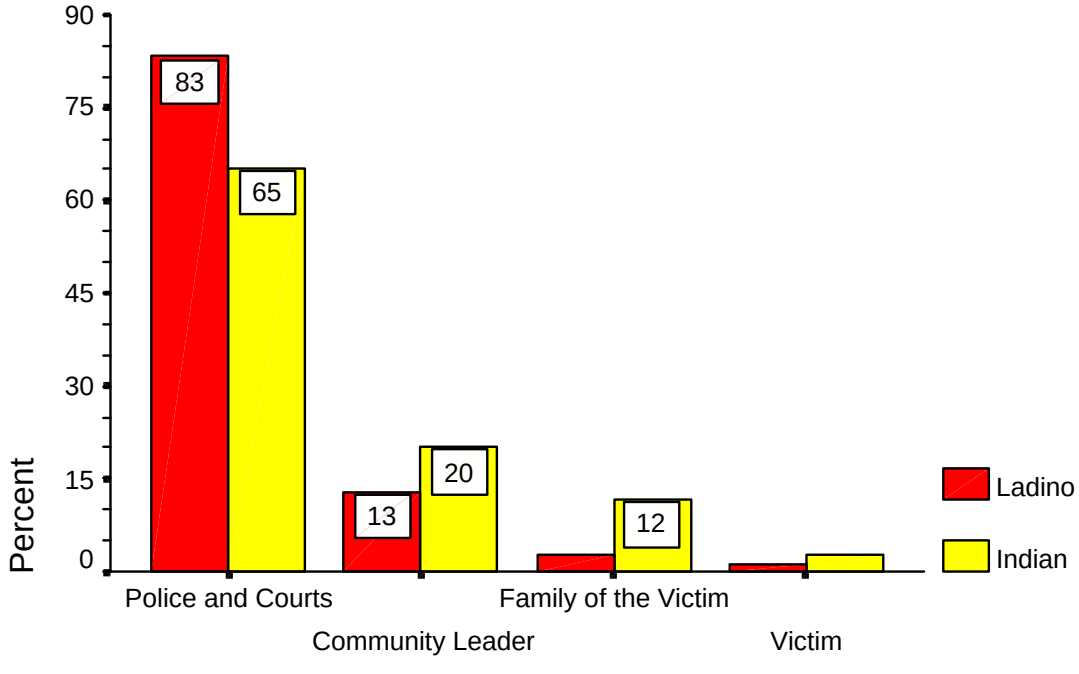
	Quetzaltanango Survey	National Survey
Police and courts	72%	78%
Community leaders	17	10
Family of the victim	8	8
Victim him/herself	3	4

Figure 4.2 provides a comparison of the responses of Indians and Ladinos in Quetzaltenango with respect to their beliefs about the most likely source of justice when a crime has been committed. As the figure shows, the Indian population has considerably less faith in the police and the courts than do the Ladinos. Conversely, the Indian respondents have more confidence in community leaders or in taking matters directly into their own hands.

Figure 4.2

Most Likely Source of Justice in Response to a Crime (Percent)

Quetzaltenango



For several years their have been programmatic efforts in Guatemala to explore various ways of incorporating traditional dispute mechanisms into the officially sanctioned legal system. The finding that a sizeable portion of the population believes that justice is more likely to be obtained from community leaders than from the police and the courts supports the appropriateness of these explorations. With that interest in view, we looked more closely at the population that indicated community leaders would be the most likely source of justice in resolving a local crime. In brief, we found:

- 71 percent identified themselves as Indian;
- 59 percent were male;
- 55 percent lived in rural areas;
- 40 years of age to be the median;
- 75 percent are involved with one civil society organization or more.

Factors Associated with Justice System Support

As discussed in Chapter 3 (see figure 3.1) , public confidence in the justice system, as indicated by responses to being asked about "*los tribunales de justicia"*, was relatively high. On our 100 point scale of political system support, the population of Quetzaltenango gave the tribunals of justice a rating of 50, which was higher than that given to any of the other five indicators of political support. On a national level, the rating for the tribunals of justice was a statistically equivalent rating of 49. As shown in table 4.12, there was also no real difference in the distribution of responses for Quetzaltenango and the national sample across the possible responses of "none", "a little" or "a lot" of confidence in the system.

Table 4.12
Confidence in Justice Tribunals

		Quetzaltenango data	National Sample
	None	19%	20%
Courts	Little	62	62
	A Lot	19	18

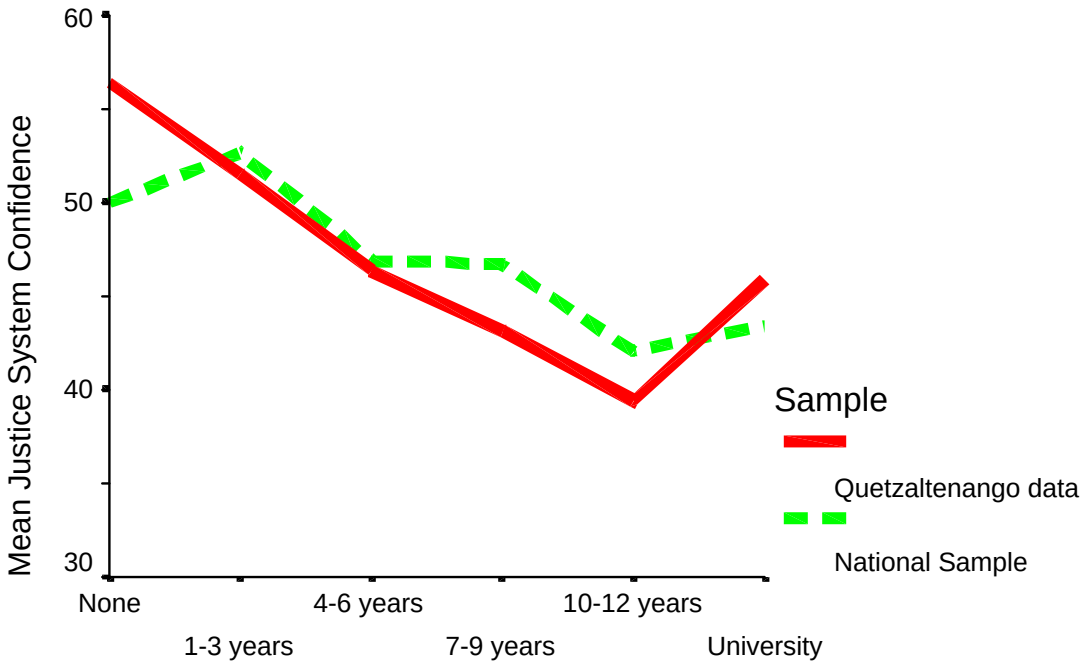
Our report on the 1997 national level survey identified five variables as significant predictors of the level of confidence people have in the justice system. These are: education, gender, urban versus rural location, quality of treatment, and geographic

region of the country. Looking at the relationship of these variables (excluding region of the country) to justice system support in Quetzaltenango we found:

***Education*:** There is a significant negative correlation between education and level of confidence. Although the pattern in Quetzaltenango is somewhat different than in Guatemala as a whole, the basic relationship is the same. That is, less well educated people have more positive attitudes towards the justice system than do better educated ones. As figure 4.3 shows, in Quetzaltenango the decline ceases at the end of high school, with persons having at least some university level experience seeming to regain faith in the system.

Figure 4.3

Education and Justice System Support



***Gender*:** There is not a statistically significant difference in the responses of males and females in Quetzaltenango. In terms of our 0 to 100 scale, women rated the justice system a score of 52, and men a 48. On the national level, the difference was statistically significant, and the difference between men and women was in the other direction (51 for males and 46 for females).

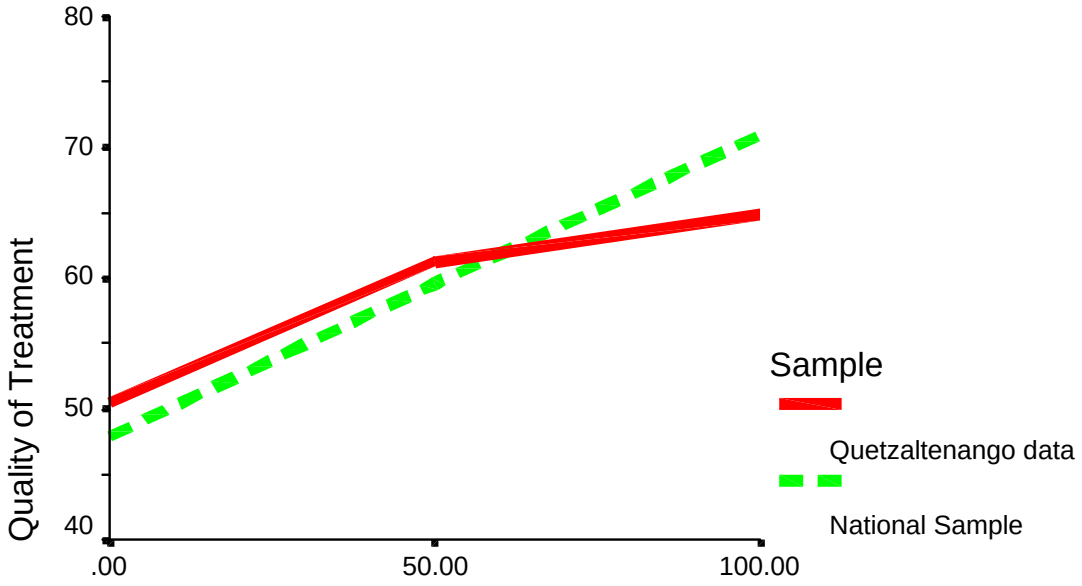
Urban versus rural: The level of confidence of residents of rural areas is significantly higher than that of persons living in urban areas. This is true at the national level as well, but the difference is substantially greater in Quetzaltenango. On the 100 point scale, in Quetzaltenango rural dwellers gave the justice system a rating of 55, while the rating from people in urban areas was 45.

***Quality of treatment*:** As figure 4.4 shows, there is a positive relationship between how people believe they have been treated by representatives of the justice system and the confidence they have in the system. This relationship was also found at the national level, and is consistent with results found by Tyler and other researchers in other contexts.

Figure 4.4

Treatment by Police, Courts and Other Authorities

and Justice System Support



The quality of treatment people receive from representatives of the justice system is also positively related to confidence in the political system as a whole. As figure 4.5 shows, there is an initial steady increase in the level of system support associated with increases in the quality of treatment, with then a leveling off in the middle ranges, and then further increases as the quality of treatment is particularly high. The area under the steadily increasing portion of the graph represents about a third of the adult population of Quetzaltenango. This suggests that improving the way police, prosecutors, and other justice system officials interact with the public may make an important difference in how the overall political system is perceived.

Figure 4.5

Treatment by Police, Courts and Other Authorities

and Political System Support in Quetzaltenango